

An Account of the
SOCIETIES
FOR
Reformation of Manners,
IN
England and Ireland.

With a PERSUASIVE to
Persons of all RANKS,
TO BE

Zealous and Diligent in Promoting the Execution of the Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, for the Effecting

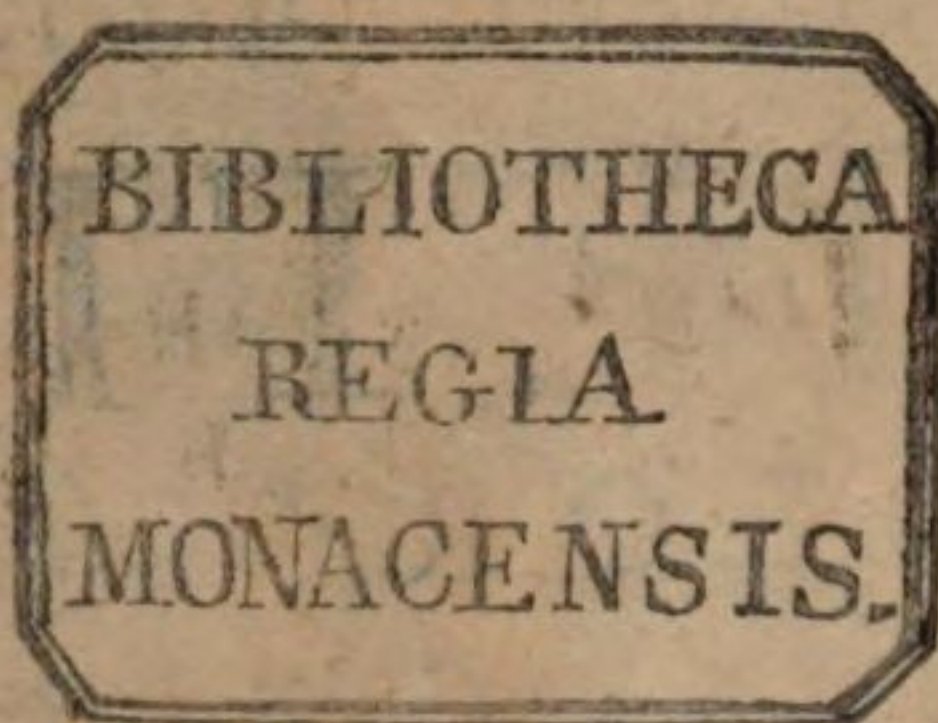
A National Reformation.

Published with the Approbation of a Considerable Number of the *Lords Spiritual and Temporal*, and Honourable *Judges* of both Kingdoms.

The Fifth Edition.

*Who is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me? Exod. 32. 20.
Who will rise up with me against the Wicked? Or, Who will
take my part against the Evil doers? Psal. 94. 16. N.Tr.*

LONDON, Printed by J. Downing, in Bartholomew-Close near West-Smithfield: And are to be Sold by him, and D. Brown, Bookseller, without Temple-Bar, 1701.



BIBLIOTHECA

REGIA

MONACENSIS.

TO THE
AUTHOR.

S I R,

WE have perused the Book you sent us, Entitled, *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*; the Design of which is so truly Great and Noble, so much for the Honour of God, the Advancement of Piety and Virtue, and the publick Good both of Church and State, that it cannot fail of being approved by all good Men. The Method likewise proposed, in order to the Promoting and Accomplishing the said Design, is, We conceive, most proper, and (by the Blessing of God attending it) most likely to prove effectual. And that Pious

Men of all Ranks and Qualities may be excited by this Book to contribute, in their respective Places and Stations, their best Endeavours towards a *National Reformation of Manners*, is the most Humble and Hearty Prayer of,

S I R,

Your very Loving Friends,

Lords Temporal,	[	<i>Pembroke, P.</i>	Lords Spiritual,	[	<i>T. Carliol.</i>
		<i>Lonsdale, P.S.</i>			<i>H. Bangor.</i>
		<i>Leeds.</i>			<i>N. Cestriens.</i>
		<i>Bedford.</i>			<i>S. Eliens.</i>
		<i>Tavistock.</i>			<i>F. Oxon.</i>
		<i>Lindsey.</i>			

Lords Temporal,

Kent.
Bridgwater.
Thanet.
Radnor.
Abingdon.
Portland.
Falconberg.
Warrington.
Rochford.
Say & Sele.
Townsend.
Longvile.
Bergavenny.
Eure.

Lords Spiritual,

E. Gloucestr.
R. Bath &
Wells.
J. Bristol.
J. Cicestriens.

Lords Temporal,

*Willoughby
of Parbam.*

Brook.

Maynard.

*Berkley of
Stratton.*

Dartmouth.

Guilford.

Lempster.

Haversham.

Barnard.

Digby.

Allington.

Cutts.

Judges,

Ed. Ward.

Ed. Nevill.

N. Lechmere.

Tho. Rokeby.

John Turton.

J. Blencowe.

Hen. Hatsell.

WE of the Kingdom of
Ireland, whose Names
are underwritten, do highly
approve of the Pious Design
of a Book, Entitled, *An Ac-*
count of the Societies for Refor-
mation of Manners, &c. and do
heartily join therein.

Lord's Spiritual,	N. Primate	Lords Temporal,	Drogheda.
	Wil. Dublin,		Mount, A-
	Arch-Bp.		lexander.
	J. Tuam,		Longford,
	Arch-Bp.		Loftus.
	Will. Cashel,		Charlemont.
	Arch-Bp.		

E. Killmore,
 Ardagb.
 D. Cork.
 Ross.
 N. Water-
 ford,
 Lismore.
 John Ossory.
 T. Killaloe.
 Ric. Meath.
 T. Dromore.

Rich. Pyne.
 John Hely.
 Rob. Doyne.
 Rich. Cox.
 J. Jeffreyson
 Hen. Echlin.
 N. Donnellan
 J. Coote.
 R. Tracy.

WE of the Kingdom of
Scotland, whose Names
are underwritten, do highly
approve of the Pious De-
sign of a Book, Entitled, *An*
Account of the Societies for Re-
formation of Manners, &c. And
do heartily join therein.

LORDS,
[*Hamilton.*
Tweeddale.
Tullibardine
Ruglen.

LORDS,
[*Rosse.*
Yester.
B. Hamilton.

THE Commissioners appointed by the late General Assembly of this National Church considering how much *Immorality* and *Vice* doth still abound in this Nation, through the Neglect of the due Execution of the Laws against *Prophaneness*; and it being recommended to them by the said Assembly, to assist and encourage any Proposals that should be made to them for the more effectual Suppressing of the same; and being likewise informed, that the Christian Endeavours of such as have entred into *Societies for Reformation of Manners*, both in *ENGLAND* and *IRELAND*, have, through the Blessing of God, proved very effectual for curbing and punishing Vice, and advancing Sobriety and Virtue; and some of the said Commissioners having seen and perused a Treatise written upon that Subject, Entitled, *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners, with a Persuasive, &c.* and most of them having seen and perused the *Abstract* thereof, they are so well satisfied with the Purpose and main Design thereof, (as very proper for exciting Persons of all Ranks to a more thorough Reformation in their own Lives, and Advancement thereof among others,) that they reckon themselves obliged to bless God, who hath put it into the Heart of others to go before them in so laudable an Example, and their Duty to imitate the same in their own Persons; and likewise to recommend it to all Ministers and Elders to peruse the said Book and its Abstract, and study to induce all piously disposed

posed Persons to imitate the laudable Zeal of these worthy *Societies*, and their *Methods*, so far as may be suitable to the Circumstances and Laws of this Nation, and the Constitutions of this Church, for compassing so glorious an End, and so absolutely necessary to the Prosperity and Welfare both of Church and State. And that both *Ministers* and *Elders*, and all other well disposed Persons, may more readily understand how the Measures and Methods of these highly commendable *Societies* may be adapted and suited to the Circumstances and Laws of this Kingdom, and the Constitutions of this Church, the said Commissioners appointed by the general Assembly, do also hereby recommend a Discourse lately printed, concerning the Execution of the Laws against *Prophaneness*, as a Piece very useful and necessary both for Ministers and all others who have a Zeal for God, and desire to see *Vice* and *Prophaneness* curbed and restrained, and the Wrath of God averted, which otherways may be expected will inevitably overtake the Land. Extracted from the Records of the said Commissioners, and subscribed by

Geo. Meldrum, Moder.
Nic. Spence, Cl. Pa. J.

At Edinburgh, the Nineteenth
Day of June, One Thousand
Seven Hundred Years, Post
Meridiem,

Nous Souffignez Commissaires nommez par l'Eglise Françoisse de la Savoie pour examiner la Traduction que Monsieur *Gally de Gaujac* Ministre Françoisse à faite d'un Livre Anglois qui à pour titre, *Relation des Societez etablies en Angleterre & en Irlande pour la Reformation des Moeurs, &c.* declarons avoir lu cette traduction dans laquelle nous n'avons rien trouve qui ne soit conforme à l'Original. Nous jugeons de plus, que cet Ouvrage pourra etre très-utile à toutes les Eglises Chretiennes pour reprimer le Vice, & faire pratiquer la vertu. Et nous croions dignes de la reconnoissance publique la Zele & la Piete des Personnes illustres qui ont formé & appuié le dessein dont l'Autheur à très-bien écrit l'Histoire, & dont on peut se promettre, avec la benediction de Dieu, des suites très-avantageuses. Fait à Londres le 17 Decembre, 1700.

De Larriere.

Calamothe.

J. de la Farque.

L. de la Faye.

WE whose Names are under-written, Commissioners appointed by the *French Church* at the *Savoy* to examine the *French Translation* of an *English Book*, Entituled, *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England and Ireland, &c.* done by *Monfieur Gally de Gaujac*, *French Minister*, do declare, that we have read the said Translation, which we find exactly agreeable to the Original. And we are moreover of Opinion, that the said Book may be of great Use to all Christian Churches for the Suppression of Vice, and for Encouraging the Practice of Virtue; and that all Men must commend and praise the Zeal and Piety of those worthy Persons who have contrived and promoted the Design; the History whereof the Author hath excellently well written, and which we hope will prove, with God's Blessing, very serviceable and successful.

De Larriere.

Calamothe.

J. de la Farque.

L. de la Faye.

Nous Souffignez Ministres & Anciens de l'Eglise
Françoise de Londres ayant été chargez par
le Consistoire de la dite Eglise de lire un livre An-
glois, Intitulé, *An Account of the Societies for Re-
formation of Manners, &c.* & d'en donner en son
Nom notre Jugement, déclarons que la Reforma-
tion des moeurs est une chose se excellente, ou les
Etats & les Eglises ont tant d'Interest que nous ne
doutons nullement que les Etrangers qui n'enten-
dent point la Langue de ce Roiaume verront avec
plaisir la traduction de ce Livre qui en montre la
nécessité, & qui même fait voir qu'elle n'est point
une belle idée qui ne puisse avoir de realité. On
s' imagine communement, que comme le disoit au-
trefois un grand Maitre en Politique, il ne faut
point attaquer les desordres enracinez de peur de
commettre les loix publiques & d'en decouvrir
trop evidemment la foiblesse, l'on voit cependant
ici que des personnes denuez presque de tout appui
humain & soutenus seulement par leur zele ayant
entrepris de s'opposer au torrent de divers pechez
qui inondoient cette Nation, ont eu des succez très-
considerables qui montrent qu'on ne se donneroit
pas une peine inutile d'entreprendre la correction
des licences qui font gemir les bonnes ames. Ainsi
la lecture de ce traité pourra être très-utile a engager
les gens de bien à s'unir autant que les loix & les
coutumes de leur pais le permettent, pour arrêter
le cours des vices qui les desolent. Et dans cette
pensée nous ne pouvons que nous ne le recomman-
dions comme un ouvrage digne d'être leu atten-
tivement

tivement, & qui merite qu'on implore la benediction
de Dieu sur l'Auteur qui l'a composé, sur ceux dont
il decrit & recommande le project, & sur les per-
sonnes illustres qui favorisent la noble & glorieuse
entreprise à laquelle il encourage. Fait à *Londres*
le 19. jour de *Mars*, 170^e.

D. Primerose.
Ch. Bertheau.
R. Zautnut.
Robert Myre.

le 19. jour de Mars 1704
entrepris à laquelle il encourage
sonnes illustres qui favorisent la noble & glorieuse
il desire & recommande le project & sur les per
de Dieu sur l'Autheur de l'ouvrage, sur ceux dont
rivement & qui merite par son importance la benediction

Robert A. Dore.
R. Zinner.
Ch. G. Schreiner.
D. Timmerman.



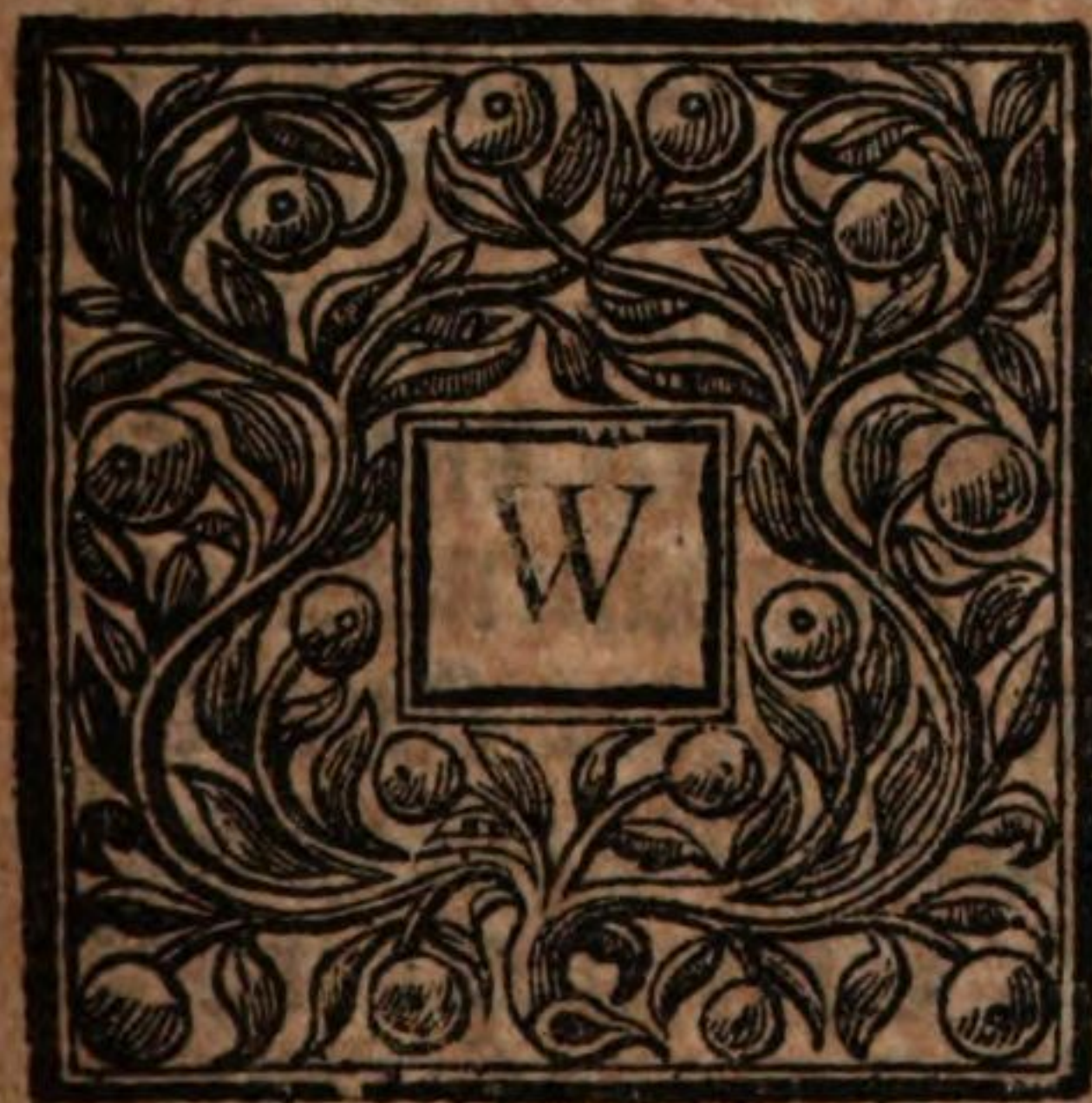
By the King,

A PROCLAMATION,

For Preventing and Punishing

Immorality and Prophaneness.

WILLIAM R.



Whereas We cannot but be deeply Sensible of the great Goodness and Mercy of Almighty God, in ut-ting an End to a Long, Bloody and Expensive War, by the Conclusion of an

Honourable Peace; so We are not less touched with a Resentment, that notwithstanding

Handwritten signature or mark.

A Proclamation.

standing this and many other great Blessings and Deliverances, Impiety, Profaneness and Immorality do still abound in this our Kingdom: And whereas nothing can prove a greater Dishonor to a well ordered Government, where the Christian Faith is professed, nor is likelier to provoke God to withdraw his Mercy and Blessings from us, and instead thereof to inflict heavy and severe Judgments upon this Kingdom, than the open and avowed Practice of Vice, Immorality and Profaneness, which amongst many Men has too much prevailed in this Our Kingdom of late Years, to the high Displeasure of Almighty God, the great Scandal of Christianity, and the ill and fatal Example of the rest of Our Loving Subjects, who have been Soberly Educated, and whose Inclinations would lead them to the Exercise of Piety and Virtue, did they not daily find such frequent and repeated Instances of Dissolute Living, Profaneness and Impiety, which has in a great Measure been occasioned by the Neglect of the Magistrates not putting in Execution those good Laws which have been made for Suppressing and Punishing thereof, and by the
ill

A Proclamation.

ill Example of many in Authority, to the great Dishonour of God, and Reproach of Our Religion: Wherefore, and for that We cannot expect Encrease or Continuance of the Blessings We and Our Subjects Enjoy, without providing Remedies to prevent the like Evils for the future, We think Our Selves bound by the Duty We owe to God, and the Care We have of the People committed to Our Charge, to proceed in taking effectual Course, that Religion, Piety, and Good Manners may, according to Our hearty Desire, flourish and Encrease under Our Administration and Government; and being thereunto moved by the Pious Address of the Commons in Parliament Assembled, We have thought fit, by the Advice of Our Privy Council, to Issue this Our Royal Proclamation, and to Declare Our Royal Purpose and Resolution to Discountenance and Punish all manner of Vice, Immorality and Profaneness, in all Persons, from the highest to the lowest Degree within this Our Realm, and particularly in such who are Employed near Our Royal Person; and that for the greater Encouragement of Religion and Morality;

A Proclamation.

lity, We will, upon all Occasions, Distinguish Men of Piety and Virtue by Marks of Our Royal Favour. And we do expect that all Persons of Honor, or in Place of Authority, will to their utmost contribute to the Discountenancing Men of Dissolute and Debauched Lives, that they being reduced to Shame and Contempt, may be enforced the sooner to Reform their ill Habits and Practices, that the Displeasure of Good Men towards them may supply what the Laws (it may be) cannot wholly prevent. And for the more Effectual Reforming these Men, who are a Discredit to Our Kingdom, Our further Pleasure is, and We do hereby strictly Charge and Command all Our Judges, Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and all other Our Officers and Ministers, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, and other Our Subjects, whom it may concern, to be very Vigilant and Strict in the Discovery and the Effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons who shall be Guilty of Excessive Drinking, Blasphemy, Profane Swearing and Cursing, Lewdness, Profanation of the Lord's Day, or other Dissolute, Immoral or Disorderly

A Proclamation.

orderly practices, as they will answer it to Almighty God, and upon pain of Our highest Displeasure. And for the more Effectual proceedings herein, We do hereby Direct and Command Our Judges of Assizes and Justices of Peace, to give strict Charges at the respective Assizes and Sessions, for the due prosecution and punishment of all Persons that shall presume to Offend in any the Kinds aforesaid, and also of all persons that, contrary to their Duty, shall be Remiss or Negligent in putting the said Laws in Execution, and that they do at their respective Assizes and Quarter-Sessions of the Peace, cause this Our Proclamation to be publickly Read in Open Court immediately before the Charge is given. And We do hereby further Charge and Command every Minister in his respective Parish or Chappel, to Read or cause to be Read this Our Proclamation, at least Four times in every Year, immediately after Divine Service, and to incite and stir up their respective Auditories to the practice of Piety and Virtue, and the Avoiding of all Immorality and Profaneness. And to the end that all Vice and Debauchery may be
pre

A Proclamation.

prevented, and Religion and Virtue practised by all Officers, private Soldiers, Mariners or others, who are Employed in Our Service, either by Sea or Land, We do hereby strictly Charge and Command all Our Commanders and Officers whatsoever, That they do take Care to Avoid all Profaneness, Debauchery, and other Immoralities, and that by the Piety and Virtue of their own Lives and Conversations they do set good Examples to all such as are under their Authority; and likewise to take Care and Inspect the Behaviour and Manners of all such as are under them, and to punish all those who shall be Guilty of any of the Offences aforesaid. And whereas several Wicked and profane Persons have presumed to print and publish several pernicious Books and Pamphlets, which contain in them Impious Doctrines against the Holy Trinity, and other Fundamental Articles of Our Faith, tending to the Subversion of the Christian Religion, therefore for the Punishing the Authors and Publishers thereof, and for the preventing such Impious Books and Pamphlets being published or printed for the future, We do hereby

A Proclamation.

hereby strictly Charge and prohibit all Persons, that they do not presume to Write, Print or Publish any such pernicious Books or Pamphlets, under the pain of Incurring Our High Displeasure, and of being punished according to the utmost Severity of the Law. And We do hereby strictly Charge and Require all Our Loving Subjects to Discover and Apprehend such Person and Persons whom they shall know to be the Authors or Publishers of any such Books or Pamphlets, and to bring them before some Justice of Peace or Chief Magistrate, in Order that they may be proceeded against according to Law.

Given at Our Court at *Kensington* the Four and Twentieth Day of *February*, 1697. In the Tenth Year of Our Reign.

G O D Save the K I N G.

H E R

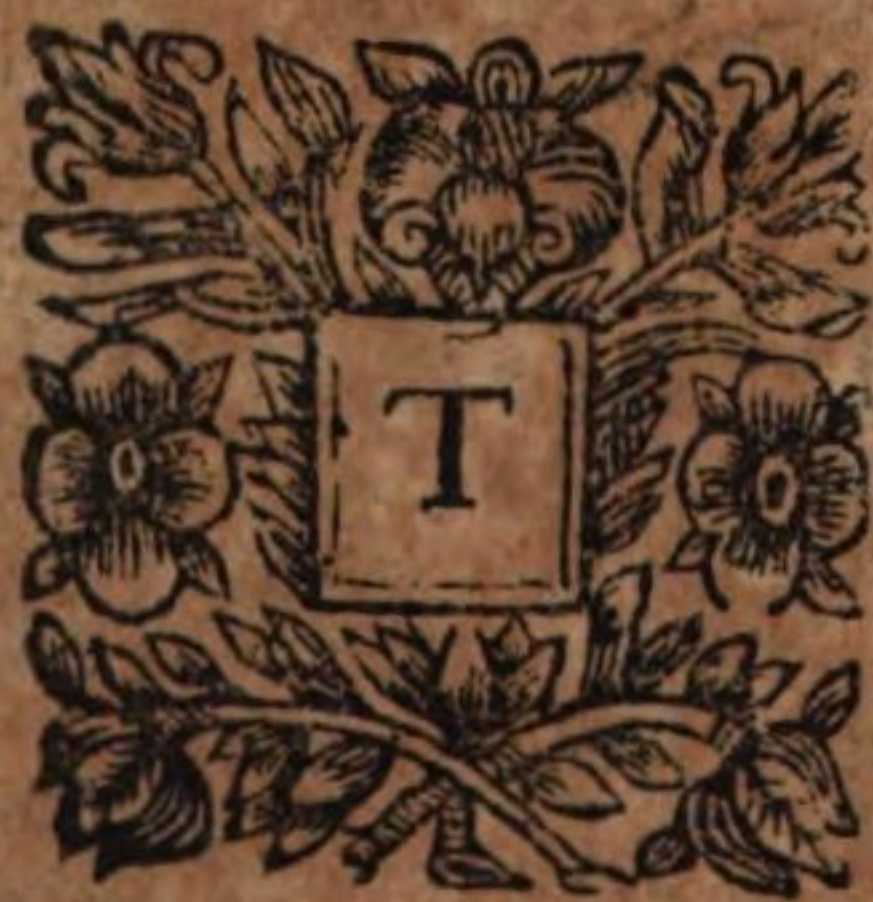
HER LATE
MAJESTIES
GRACIOUS
LETTER

(In the Absence of the KING,)

*To the Justices of the Peace in the County of
Middlesex, July 9. 1691.*

For the Suppressing of
Prophaneness and Debauchery,

M A R I E R.



*Rusty and Well-Beloved, We
Greet you well. Consider-
ing the great and indispen-
sable Duty incumbent upon
Us, to promote and encourage
a Reformation of the Manners of all Our
Subjects, that so the Service of God may be
Advanced.*

The Queens Letter.

Advanced, and those Blessings be procured to these Nations, which always attend a Conscientious Discharge of our respective Duties, according to our several Relations; We think it necessary, in order to the obtaining of this Publick Good, to recommend to you the putting in Execution, with all Fidelity and Impartiality, those Laws which have been made, and are still in force against the Prophanation of the Lord's-Day, Drunkenness, Prophane Swearing and Cursing, and all other Lewd, Enormous, and Disorderly Practices, which, by a long continued neglect, and connivence of the Magistrates and Officers concerned, have universally spread themselves, to the dishonour of God, and scandal of our Holy Religion, whereby it is now become the more necessary for all Persons in Authority to apply themselves with all possible Care and Diligence to the Suppressing of the same. We do therefore hereby charge and require You, to take

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the

The Queens Letter.

the most effectual Methods for putting the Laws in Execution against the Crimes above-mentioned, and all other Sins and Vices, particularly those which are most prevailing in this Realm, and that especially in such Cases where any Officer of Justice shall be guilty of any of those Offences, or refuse or neglect to discharge the Duty of his Place for the Suppressing them, that so such Officer, by his Punishment, may serve for an Example to others. And to this end, We would have you careful and diligent in encouraging all Constables, Church-Wardens, Headboroughs, and all other Officers and Persons whatsoever, to do their part in their several Stations, by timely and impartial Informations, and Prosecutions against all such Offenders, for preventing of such Judgments which are solemnly denounced against the Sins above-mentioned. We cannot doubt of your Performance hereof, since it is a Duty to which you are obliged
by

The Queens Letter.

by Oath, and are likewise engaged to the discharge of it, as you tender the Honour of Almighty God, the flourishing Condition of his Church in this Kingdom, the Continuance of His Holy Religion among Us, and the Prosperity of Your Country: *And so We bid you Farewell.*

Given at Our Court at *White-Hall* the Ninth Day of *July*, One Thousand Six Hundred Ninety One, in the Third Year of Our Reign.

By Her Majesty's Command,

To Our Trusty and Well-Beloved, the Justices of the Peace for the County of *Middlesex*, at *Hicks's Hall*.

Nottingham.

THE HUMBLE
ADDRESS
OF THE
House of Commons
TO THE
KING,

For the Suppressing of
Prophaneness and Vice.

May it please your MAJESTY,



WE Your Majesties most
Dutiful and Loyal Sub-
jects, the Commons in
Parliament Assembled,
Do, with great Joy and
Comfort, remember the many Testi-
monies which Your Majesty hath given

The House of Commons Address.

us of Your Sincerity and Zeal for the True Reformed Religion, as Establish'd in this Kingdom: And in particular, we beg leave to present to Your Majesty, our most Humble and Thankful Acknowledgements, for the late Gracious Declaration Your Majesty hath made to us from the Throne; That You would effectually discourage Prophaneness and Immorality, which chiefly, by the Neglect and ill Example of too many Magistrates, are, like a general Contagion, diffused and spread throughout the Kingdom, to the great Scandal and Reproach of our Religion, and to the Dishonour and Prejudice of Your Majesty's Government.

Therefore, in Concurrence with Your Majesty's Pious Intentions, we do most humbly Desire, That Your Majesty would Issue out Your Royal Proclamation, Commanding all Your Majesty's
b 3 Judges,

The House of Commons Address.

Judges, Justices of the Peace, and other Magistrates, to put in speedy Execution those good Laws that are now in Force against Prophaneness and Immorality ; giving due Encouragement to all such as do their Duty therein : And that Your Majesty would be pleased, to Require from Your Judges and Justices of Assize, from time to time, an Account of such their Proceedings.

And since the Examples of Men in High and publick Stations have a Powerful Influence upon the Lives of others ; we do most Humbly beseech Your Majesty, That all Vice, Prophaneness and Irreligion, may in a particular manner be Discouraged in all those who have the Honour to be Employed near Your Royal Person ; and in all others who are in Your Majesty's Service, by Sea and Land ; Appointing strict Orders to be given to all Your
Com-

The House of Commons Address.

Commanders, That they not only shew a Good Example themselves, but also Inspect the Manners of those under them; And that Your Majesty would, upon all Occasions, distinguish Men of Piety and Virtue, by Marks of Your Royal Favour.

We do further, in all Humility, beseech Your Majesty, That Your Majesty would give such Effectual Orders, as to Your Royal Wisdom shall seem fit, for the Suppressing all pernicious Books and Pamphlets, which contain in them Impious Doctrines against the Holy Trinity, and other Fundamental Articles of our Faith, tending to the Subversion of the Christian Religion; and that the Authors and Publishers thereof may be Discountenanced and Punished.

And we do also most humbly beseech Your Majesty, That Your said

The House of Commons Address.

Proclamation may be Order'd to be Read at least Four times in the Year, in all Churches and Chapels, immediately after Divine Service ; and at the Assizes and Quarter - Sessions of the Peace, just before the Charge is given.

We present to Your Majesty, this our most Humble ADDRESS, proceeding from our Duty and Zeal for the Glory of God, and to the end that all our Counsels may be bless'd by His Divine Assistance, and may produce Honour, Safety and Happiness, with all the Blessings of a Lasting Peace, to Your Majesty, and Your People.

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SOCIETIES
 FOR
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 IN
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IT may be hoped, that this plain Discourse *The Design* will meet no other Enemies than such as *of the Book*, are likewise Enemies to *Religion and Virtue*, and are lost to the Sense of *Good and Evil*, since the only *Design* of it is evidently to promote the true Interest of *Religion*; and it does not oppose any one Man's honest Advantage, or encounter any common Opinion, that I know of, among us: The Observation having been long since made, That how many Disputes soever there have been rais'd among the too various Denominations of Christians, concerning *the Power of the Magistrate in Matters of Religion*, with respect either to *Faith or Worship*, it hath never been a Dispute, *Whether the Magistrate hath* *Magi-* *strates have* *Power to punish Immoralities*: The Prosecution of *an indispu-* *table Power* Men for their Vices is not reckoned Persecution: It being as plainly the Duty of the Magistrate, *to punish Im-* *moralities.* from the Word of God, which obliges him to *Execute Wrath upon those that do Evil*, as it is evi- *Rom. 13. 4.* *dent*

dent from the dismal Effects of Vice and Wickedness in all Ages, that Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery* are necessary for the Preservation of Communities, as that *Piety* and *Virtue* are requisite to their Well-being; and that unrestrained *Vice* and *Prophaneness* are as fatal to publick Societies, as they are destructive to private Persons.

But tho' Laws are necessary to the very *Being* of Communities, and good Laws to their Happiness, yet they cannot be supposed, by any Rational Man, to be any more sufficient of themselves to procure the Welfare of the Body Politick, without Execution, then the best Medicines can procure the Health of the Natural Body, without the Use and Application of them.

The Execution of our Penal Laws against Immoralities necessary to the Welfare of the Nation, and practicable, and the Attempts of it highly laudable. If therefore the *Execution* of good Laws be necessary, as is proved, to the Welfare of Communities; and those that concern *Matters of Religion*, as do those for the Punishment of *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, are allow'd, in a Christian Country, to deserve the greatest regard, the Interest of Religion and the Welfare of the Community being so deeply concerned therein, it cannot be a matter of Dispute, whether it becomes Men that call themselves *Christians* to promote the Execution of such Laws: Nay, it cannot be well imagined, how Men can have a *Zeal* for the Service of the Great GOD of Heaven and Earth, or can have a *due Love* to Mankind, who have no regard to the Honour of God, or Welfare of their Country; as shall hereafter more fully appear.

Now what becomes all Men in their several Capacities to do, in the Promoting of the Execution of our Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, my Business, in the first place, is to shew is Practicable, and that it may be done by us of
this

this Nation ; * which I shall endeavour to prove * Admone-
 not only from what was done some Years ago, tur omnis
 in the times of Usurpation, but from what hath ætas id fieri
 been done within *Eight Years* past, in and about posse quod
 this City, and other Parts of the Kingdom. And aliquando
 in the next place I shall consider the particular factum est.
 Obligations of some Orders of Men to give their
 hearty Assistance in this pious Work.

It is very well known, that in the late times
Prophane Swearing and *Cursing*, *Drunkenness*, *Open*
Lewdness, and *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, were
 generally discouraged and suppressed. And it is
 as well known, to our Shame, that those Sins have
 not only since revived among us, by reason of the
 Impunity of Offenders, the Countenance and Pre-
 ferment they have met with, and the Contagion
 of great and ill Examples, but have been commit-
 ted with great Impudence, and without Controul ;
 without either Shame, or the Fear of the Laws ; so
 that they were seen and heard at Noon-day, and
 in our open Streets : and as if we were resolved
 to out-do the Impieties of the very Heathens,
Prophaneness, and even *Blasphemy*, was too often
 the Wit and Entertainment of our Scandalous
 Play-Houses, and *sincere Religion* became the Jest
 and Scorn of our Courts in the late Reigns.

And thus *Debauchery* diffused it self throughout
 the whole Body of the Nation, till at last our Mo-
 rals were so corrupted, that *Virtue* and *Vice* had
 with too many changed their Names ; it was rec-
 koned *Breeding* to *Swear*, *Gallantry* to be *Lewd*,
good Humour to be drunk, and *Wit* to despise
Sacred things ; and it was enough to have rendred
 one suspected of *Phanaticism*, or an abjectness of
 Spirit, and a matter of Reproach, not to suffer

one's self to be carried away with this Torrent of Wickedness, and not to glory in those fashionable Vices. Nay, it was thought an unpardonable Rudeness, even for a *Clergy-Man*, or *Magistrate*, to reprove or punish one that was guilty of them, notwithstanding the solemn Obligations of their Oaths and Vows to do it. And even after the Accession of his present Majesty to the Crown, tho' Popery immediately vanished, *Immorality* and *Prophaneness* still kept their ground, as if they expected an Establishment with our Liberties after so long and peaceable a Possession.

Reformation was indeed talkt of by some Persons as an excellent thing, and as a proper way of expressing our Thankfulness to Almighty God for his Mercies to this Nation, and to procure a continuance of them to us, and to our Posterity: But *Vice* was look'd upon as too formidable an Enemy to be provok'd, and *publick Reformation* was thought so difficult an Undertaking, that those that gave it very good words, judged it not safe to set about it in the time of War, whilst there were so many in Arms on the other side; and therefore they seem'd to decline the Thoughts of it till we should see the End of the uncertain War we were engag'd in; tho' they were, I conceive, otherwise instructed by God's express Command to the

Deut. 23.9. *Jews: When the Host goeth forth against thine Enemy, then keep thy self from every wicked thing.*

An Account of the Rise and Success of the Endeavours of a few private Persons for the Pro- When things were in this dismal and almost desperate State, it came into the Hearts, it seems, of Five or Six private Gentlemen of the Church of England, to engage in this difficult and hazardous Enterprize, who considering that the higher the Tide of Wickedness was, the more need there was of Opposing it; that our crying Sins were our greatest

greatest Enemies, and most threatned our Ruine ; *moting the* that we have Laws in force against them ; and *Execution of* that they should have the Laws of God with the *our Penal-* Prayers of good Men on their side, resolved, *Laws a-* whatever Difficulties they met with, to make *gainst Pro-* their Efforts for Promoting the Execution of our *phaneness* Laws against *Debauchery*, and the *and Vice.* Suppressing of them by advisable Methods.

This was such an Undertaking as we might *The Opposi-* well believe would soon alarm the Enemy, but *tion that* which the Patrons of Vice would make no doubt *was met* to defeat before any Progress could be made ; and *with.* which the prudent and wise Men of the World, who rely on second Causes, with too little regard to the first, the Almighty Creator and Governor of the World, *with whom* (as King *Aſa* expreſſes it in his Prayer) *it is nothing to help, whether with* *2 Chron.* *many, or with thoſe that have no Power,* would look *14. 11.* on with Pity, if not with Deriſion ; and ſo it proved, that the Champions and Advocates of Debauchery put themſelves in Array to defend their wretched and infamous Liberties ; they ſet themſelves to ridicule, to deſame, and to oppoſe this Deſign, and to overthrow the hopes and expectations of the Undertakers : And ſome others, whom in Charity we would not look on as Enemies of Religion and Virtue, tho' we cannot eaſily eſteem them our Friends, whoſe Conduct has ſo greatly obſtructed the Progress of this Deſign, conſulting Humane Prudence, or rather Worldly Policy, too much, and perhaps their own Obligations too little, were very forward to cenſure theſe *Attempts* as the effect of an imprudent and an unreaſonable Zeal : But notwithſtanding a furious Oppoſition from Adverſaries, the ill Offices of thoſe from whom better things might have been expected,

* *The Right
Reverend
Dr. Stilling-
fleet.*

* July 9.
1691.

ed, and the unkind Neutrality of Friends, these *Gentlemen*, who in a little time began to add some others to their Number, not only kept their Ground, but made farther Advances; for our late Excellent QUEEN, of Glorious Memory, having this Affair laid before Her, in the Absence of the King, by a Prelate of great Learning, and Fame, (the *late Bishop of *Worcester*) She had just Sentiments of it, and therefore thought it became Her to give it Countenance; She Graciously condescended to thank those who were concerned in it, and readily promised them Her Assistance; and afterwards, upon this Application made to Her Majesty, She was pleased to send Her * *Letter to the Justices of Middlesex*, commanding them to put the *Laws against Prophaneness and Vice in Execution with all Fidelity and Impartiality; and to this end, that they should be careful and diligent in encouraging all Persons to do their part in giving Informations against Offenders, as they were obliged by their Oath, as Magistrates, to do; and when there was further occasion, She shew'd She was in earnest to promote this Design, by taking other more effectual Methods for that purpose. But as it may well be supposed, That the Queens patronizing of these Endeavours could not but give Credit and Strength to them; so the Affair, by Her Death, (it may as easily be imagined) must lose a great Advantage: But yet the Loss (tho' it appeared exceedingly great) did not discourage those that were engaged in this Enterprize. For as they at first set about it with little or no Expectation of such a Patroness, because they thought it would be an acceptable Service to the King of Kings, and that it would promote the true Interests of Religion, and the Welfare of their Country:*

try : So the same Considerations obliged them to pursue their Design with equal Vigour and Zeal, tho' they were deprived of so great a Friend and Protector. And it seemed that Divine Providence by this time favour'd their Endeavours, by the great and remarkable Success that had attended them ; for Multitudes of Offenders had been by their means brought to Punishment. The publick Opposition that was at first made to their Undertaking was broke through, (which the Lord Bishop of *Gloucester*, who hath been a great Encourager of this Undertaking, gave an Account of in his *Vindication* of it, which, it may be wished, there may never be any further Occasion to remember) and the Honesty of it had recommended it to the Virtuous and Unprejudiced part of the Nation, whom the Account of these Matters had reached ; the Enemy, after a severe Examination, having not been able to discover, that any illegal Methods had been used, or that any secular Interest was pursued by those, who bestow'd their Time and their Pains in carrying on so ungrateful and hazardous a Work, as that of *Reformation* will be always found, since it is the Opposing of ill Men in their sinful Indulgencies, which are often more desirable to them than their very Lives. With these Encouragements they prosecuted their Business, encreasing their Number by the Addition of Persons of considerable Note, and of the best Character ; some of whom, tho' they were of different Opinions from those of the *Establis'd Church*, as to some points concerning Religion, were willing to unite their Strength in the common Cause of Christianity, and engage in so Noble a Design, that had done so much Good : By whose *joint Endeavours* great Advances have been made

towards a *Reformation of Manners*, which is every day getting ground, Persons of *various Ranks*, of *considerable Fortunes*, and of the *clearest Character*, offering Assistance to it, not only in and about the City of *London*, but from several Parts of the Kingdom.

A short Scheme of their Design in the Account of the Societies that have been formed for the Prosecution of it in England and Ireland. But since it hath been long desired, that a more distinct and clear View may be given to the World of this *Undertaking*, and of the *Advances* of it, which those that have been principally concerned in it (so industriously consulting Privacy) have not hitherto been prevailed on, by any Temptations, either of Vanity or Resentment, to make Publick, being more desirous that it should be known by the good Effects it produces, than by any *History* or *Narrative*; I ask leave to present the World with a *short Scheme* of the *Design*, and some *Account* of the *Managers* of it, that the well-disposed part of the Nation, that have hitherto been Strangers to it, may, by the Knowledge thereof, be induced to join in so good a Work, and now especially, since this Conjunction is so favourable to it, beyond our Expectation.

There is a very large Body of Persons, compos'd of the *Original Society* beforementioned, with the Additions that have been since made of Persons of Eminency in the *Law*, *Members of Parliament*, *Justices of Peace*, and considerable *Citizens of London*, of known Abilities and great Integrity, who frequently meet to consult of the *best Methods* for carrying on the Business of *Reformation*, and to be ready to advise and assist others that are already engaged, or any that are willing to join in the same Design.

This

This *Society* is at a considerable *Yearly Charge* for the effectual managing their *Business*; but takes no *Contributions* of any but their own *Members*, by whose *Endeavours*, as was said before, *Thousands of Offenders* in *London* and *Westminster* have been brought to *Punishment* for *Swearing*, *Drunkenness*, and *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*; and a great part of the *Kingdom* has been awakened, in some measure, to a sense of their *Duty* in this respect, and thereby a very hopeful *Progress* is made towards a *General Reformation*.

A *Second Society* is of about *Fifty Persons*, *Tradesmen* and others, who have more especially applied themselves to the *Suppression* of *Lewdness*, by bringing the *Offender* to legal *Punishment*: These may have actually suppressed and rooted out about *Five Hundred Disorderly Houses*, and caused to be punished some *Thousands* of *Lewd Persons*, besides *Swearers*, *Drunkards*, and *Prophaners of the Lord's-Day*, as may appear by their *Printed Lists* of *Offenders*. These *Persons*, by their prudent and legal management of their *Business*, have received great *Countenance* and *Encouragement* in our *Courts of Judicature*, and very particular *Encouragement* and *Assistance*, for several *Years* past, from the *Lord-Mayor* and *Court of Aldermen*, who are sensible of the great *Service* that is done by them, which they express upon proper *Occasions*.

A *Third Society* is of *Constables*, (of which sort of *Officers* care is taken to form *Yearly* a new *Body* in this *City*) who meet to consider of the most effectual way to discharge their *Oaths*, to acquaint one another with the *Difficulties* they meet with, to resolve on proper *Remedies*, to divide them-

themselves in the several Parts of the City, so as to take in the whole to the best Advantage, for the inspecting of *Disorderly Houses*, taking up of *Drun-kards, Lewd Persons, Prophaners of the Lord's-Day*, and *Swearers* out of the Streets and Markets, and carrying them before the Magistrates; and I must observe, that this is found a very advisable and successful Method for Constables to take, for the Suppressing of the abominable Sin of *Swearing*, when private Persons are negligent in giving of *Informations*, and the Magistrate is careless of his Duty.

A *Fourth* Rank of Men, who have been so highly instrumental in this *Undertaking*, that they may be reckoned a *Corner-Stone* of it, is of such as have made it some part of their Business to give *Informations* to the *Magistrate*, as they have had Opportunity, of such Breaches of the Laws as were beforementioned. Many of these Persons have given the World a great and almost unheard of Example, in this corrupt Age, of *Zeal* and *Christian Courage*, having underwent, at the beginning more especially of these Proceedings, many *Abuses*, and great *Reproaches*, not only from exasperated and hardened Offenders, but often from their lukewarm Friends, irreligious Relations, and sometimes from *Unfaithful Magistrates*, by whom they have been reviled, brow-beaten, and discouraged from performing such important Service, so necessary to the Welfare of their Country. And herein these brave Men have acted with so great Prudence, as well as Zeal, that fore-seeing it might one day be the Policy of the Enemy of all Goodness, and the Business of wicked Men, who are his Instruments, and who could not generally be brought to Shame and Punishment for
their

their infamous Practices but by their means, to raise Prejudices in the Minds of bad and unthinking People against them, and to disparage their Proceedings, by whispering of Jealousies of their being influenced in what they did by Worldly Considerations; That the World may be challenged to make appear, That these *Societies* have been so much as treated with, by any Person whatsoever, to give *Informations* with any Promise of a Reward, or that they have ever received the least Advantage by any Convictions upon these Statutes against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, the Money arising thereby being wholly appropriated to the Poor, except the third part of the Penalty upon the Statute against *Prophanation of the Lord's Day*, which, in some Cases, the Magistrate hath a bare Power to dispose of, but was never, that we know of, received by any one of these Persons, which I thought fit to observe, as a lasting Answer to any Objection of this kind, in Justice to them who have gone through Frowns and Reproaches for the sake of doing so much good; and that all Men may see with how great Reason it is, both from the Character of the Persons concerned in the discharging of this Service to Religion, and their Country, as well as from the Nature and Necessity of it, (which I shall hereafter enquire into) that the Name of an *Informer* is now become much more glorious among wise and good Men, than it was grown contemptible by the ill Practices of some in our days: And that it does therefore appear truly honourable for Persons of the greatest Quality to give *Informations* in these Cases, for the Service of the most High God, as some among us, of greater Ranks than the World does perhaps think of, have of late done;
and

Ezra 9.
1, 2.

and which, it hath been observed, in divers *Discourses* lately published, that even Princes under the *Jewish Dispensation* were not ashamed to do. Now when these things were done, the Princes came to me, saying, The People of Israel, and the Priests and the Levites have not separated themselves, from the People of the Lands, doing according to their Abominations, &c.

There are *Eight* other regulated and mixt Bodies of *House-keepers* and *Officers*, in the several Quarters of *London*, *Westminster*, and *Southwark*, who differ in their Constitution from those before-mentioned, but generally agree in the Methods of inspecting the *Behaviour* of *Constables* and other *Officers*, and going along with them, and assisting them in their Searching of *Disorderly Houses*, in taking up of *Offenders*, and carrying them before the *Magistrate*, and also in giving *Informations* themselves, as there is Occasion.

Besides those beforementioned, there are about *Nine and Thirty Religious Societies* of another kind, in and about *London* and *Westminster*, which are propagated into other Parts of the Nation; as *Nottingham*, *Gloucester*, &c. and even into *Ireland*, where they have been for some Months since spreading in divers Towns and Cities of that Kingdom; as *Kilkenny*, *Drogheda*, *Mannouth*, &c. especially in *Dublin*, where there are about *Ten* of these *Societies*, which are promoted by the *Bishops* and *Inferior Clergy* there. These Persons meet often to *Pray*, *Sing Psalms*, and *Read the Holy Scriptures* together, and to *Reprove*, *Exhort*, and *Edifie* one another by their *Religious Conferences*. They moreover carry on at their Meetings, *Designs of Charity*,

rity, of different kinds; such as Relieving the
Wants of Poor House-keepers, maintaining their
Children at School, setting of *Prisoners at Liberty*,
 supporting of *Lectures* and *daily Prayers* in our
Churches. These are the **SOCIETIES** which
 our late Gracious Queen, as the Learned Bishop
 that hath writ an *Essay* on her Memory tells us,
 took so great Satisfaction in, *That She enquired of-*
ten and much about them, and was glad they went on
and prevailed; which, Thanks be to God, they
 continue to do; as the Reverend Dr. *Woodward*,
 who hath obliged the World with a very parti-
 cular Account of the *Rise and Progress* of them,
 hath lately acquainted us. And these likewise are
SOCIETIES that have proved so exceedingly
 serviceable in the Work of **REFORMATION**,
 that they may be reckoned a *chief Support* to it, as
 our late Great Primate Arch-Bishop *Tillotson* de-
 clar'd, upon several Occasions, after he had ex-
 amined their *Orders* and enquired into their *Lives*,
That he thought they were to the Church of England.

*The Bishop
 of Salisbu-
 ry's Essay on
 the Memory
 of the late
 Queen, pag.
 118.*

I might now give an Account of a *Society* of
Ministers of the Church of England for carrying on
 of this Work, and another *Agreement of Justices of*
the Peace; but I am with-held at present by some
 Considerations from descending to any further
Particulars concerning them; and must content
 my self with saying what will easily be allow'd,
 That the *stated Meetings* of such Persons are as
 proper, and may be more useful for the Promoting
 of this Work, than any other I have describ'd.
 For what might we not expect from the *Zealous*
Endeavours of these *Orders* of Men in this *Affair*?
 which, 'tis obvious, will not be employ'd with so
 great Effect, as when they form themselves into
Societies,

*The great
 Advantage
 for the car-
 rying on of
 this Work of
 pious Persons
 uniting in
 Societies.*

Societies, or at least have frequent and stated Times of Meeting, for the Prosecution of this Business. 'Tis true, that *Ministers* and *Magistrates* have far greater Advantages, as well as more particular Obligations than others, (as I shall hereafter endeavour to make appear) to be serviceable in this Work of *Reformation*; but yet when they act alone in this Contention between *Virtue* and *Vice*, tho' they will do great good in our present Circumstances, and much more than they will easily believe till they are heartily engaged in it; yet they must expect to be under Disadvantage on some Occasions as well as other single Persons, who exert their Zeal without a Communication with one another, and particularly when they encounter Combinations of wicked Men, which it is not unlikely will sometimes happen. Do we not see by what Methods the Men of the World propagate Wickedness, and countermine good Designs? Is it not by their Clubs and Confederacies? Are we not sensible with what Advantage our Civil Concerns are carried on by Companies and Corporations? Nay, Does not the Account before us convince us of the great Usefulness, or rather Necessity, of good Mens confederating and meeting frequently together, to concert Methods, and encourage one another in this difficult Work of Confronting and Suppressing of bare-fac'd and insolent Wickedness? And that the Reason why good Men have not sooner or more generally done it, may be, because *the Children of this World are in their Generation wiser than the Children of Light*. Since therefore Union and Method seem evidently to give good Men much the same Advantage (abstracting from the Consideration of the Goodness of their Cause, and the

Divine

Luke 16.8.

Divine Aid that they may expect) in their just and brave Opposition to *Prophaneness* and *Immoralities*, against the greater Number, 'tis to be feared, of the Wicked, as Discipline and good Ground in War gives a small Body of Men against a very unequal Number of those that are undisciplin'd, and with disadvantageous Ground: 'Tis highly to be wished, That not only *Societies* of *Ministers* and *Magistrates*, but of all other *Degrees* of Men, were set up in Prosecution of this Design, in all Parts of the Kingdom, more especially in all Towns, Cities, and Corporations. And it may charitably be hoped, that there are but few, if any, such Places, where there are not to be found *Three* or *Four* Persons at least, of one or other Denomination of Christians, that have a Zeal for God and Religion, who may easily form themselves into a *Society*, which may enlarge by degrees, and which will, probably speaking, go a great way towards the Suppressing publick Disorders where they are; but may have a marvellous Effect, with God's Blessing, for this End, where there is a *Magistrate* that makes a Conscience of his *Duty*, or a *Minister* that encourages *Reformation*; as would be manifest to any that had observed in how short a time, and to what a degree, open Wickedness hath been checkt, where a *zealous Minister* hath given himself the trouble, I might rather have said the Pleasure, of meeting sometimes a *Society* of his Parishioners, to encourage their Zeal and Constancy in this Work of *Reformation*, even where the *Magistrates* have been either open or secret Enemies to it. The *Advantages* moreover are too many to be insisted on in this place, for the Exercising of our own Graces, and the Confirming our Virtuous Dispositions, by our *Associating* with our Fel-
low

low Christians for the carrying on Religious Designs, in an Age when Christian Conversation, which hath an inestimable Value with Men of Religion, is so exploded by a wicked World, and is with such difficulty met with. The *Forming* therefore of good Men into such pious Combinations, for the over-balancing those of Vice, the countermining the contrary Attempts of all wicked Men, and recovering the Power as well as Form of Religion, is most earnestly recommended to all the Friends of Piety and Virtue. And methinks it may be expected from all, that have any sincere regard to God's Honour, their own and their Country's Happiness, that they should exert themselves, in their several Capacities, with a noble Zeal and Emulation, for the Perfecting of this great Undertaking. And now especially the Times of Peace are returned, which we have been told, are the Times of *Reformation*, surely none that carry the Face of Christians can with Confidence offer new Excuses any longer to postpone it; we may now hope for the Assistance of some at least, of the cautious and prudent Men amongst us, who have hitherto, with great Gravity, stood Neuters in this Affair, and that they will at last answer the Expectation of good Men from them, and suffer the Generations to come to call them Blessed. 'Tis at least to be hoped, that if they are too Great and Wise to engage in the Work themselves, they will not however obstruct it more than the open Enemies of it can do, by their calling it an *Impracticable Undertaking*, whispering groundless Jealousies of the Design, or uncharitable and disadvantageous Characters of the Persons concerned in the Promoting it; but rather, that they will let the World see that their Zeal is engaged
in

in the carrying on of wiser and more successful Methods, for the Effecting of a *National Reformation*. And one would think, that the employing our Labour or Authority in this *Noble Design*, of being instrumental in doing good to Multitudes of Souls, by Suppressing of National Sins, and by consequence the Reviving the Power and Reputation of Religion, and thereby preventing National Judgments, should be more worth the Concern and Application of Christians, and should afford a more true and solid Satisfaction than the pursuit of our Worldly Interests or Pleasures. All indeed are not capable of being serviceable in the same way; but whether it be by *Executing the Laws*, or by *Preaching, Discoursing, Writing, Informing, Setting up of Societies*, or otherwise contributing towards it, which way so ever it be that we can further this glorious Work, it will, I think, be hard to find a good Excuse for any that shall decline their Concurrency, according to their Advantages and Opportunities, in an Undertaking which it would become the greatest Man upon Earth to promote, * which is now so far facilitated by the Schemes that are laid, and the Methods it is put into.

* See the Help to a National Reformation, lately published.

We have seen some few Persons engaging in this Enterprize before they had any Methods to direct them, or many Examples to encourage them, encountering Opposition in the first forming their Design, from open Enemies, and perhaps false Friends; suffering cruel Mockings, unkind Censures, and unjust Reproaches, and yet not giving way. We have seen them surmounting their greatest Difficulties, so that the main brunt seems now near over, and going on with that Resolution and Success, that the Deluge of publick

The Progress of this Undertaking.

* See the Printed Accounts of the Number of these Offenders that have been Yearly punished.

Wickedness is visibly abated. We are told, that many *Thousands* have been brought to Punishment for *Swearing* and *Cursing*, by their means, *Seventy* or *Eighty* Warrants a Week having been executed on the^{se} Offenders, in and about this City only, since the late *Act of Parliament* against *Swearing* and *Cursing* was made, which hath given so great and remarkable a Check to those scandalous Sins, that our Constables sometimes of late have found it difficult to take up a *Swearer* in divers of our Streets and Markers, where, within a few Years past, horrid Oaths, Curses, and Imprecations, were heard Day and Night; that a multitude of *Drunkards*, and *Prophaners of the Lord's-Day*, some of whom kept as it were open Markets within a few Years past, have been made Examples by their means; * that *Hundreds* of *Disorderly Houses*, which were little better than Stews, and Nests for Thieves, Clippers and Coiners, &c. have been rooted out and suppressed; and that some *Thousands* of *Lewd Persons* have been Imprisoned, Fined, and Whipt; so that the Tower-end of the Town and many of our Streets, have been much purg'd of that pestilent Generation of *Night-Walkers*, that us'd to infest them, which were a Reproach to this Noble City, and a Scandal to Christianity, *Forty* or *Fifty* of them having been sent in a Week to *Bridewell*, where they have of late received such Discipline, that a considerable Number of them have chose rather to be transported to our Plantations, to work there for an honest Subsistence, than to expose themselves, by their lewd way of Living, to Shame and Punishment, to Poverty and Disease, to all sorts of wicked Practices, and the danger of the Gallows, to which, in the Conclusion, they

they are often, if not generally, brought. And I may justly add, That far greater things, by the Application of the *Original Society of Gentlemen*, have been accomplished, than what have yet been mentioned, and such as I am not permitted at this time to discover. But thus much may be said, That the *Endeavours* of those *Gentlemen* have not been confined to this City and Kingdom, but have extended as far as *Ireland*, where they have had an Influence, very little, I think, to the Honour of that Kingdom, from whence it had its first Rise; of which, since a more particular Account may be expected, I may satisfy myself, at present, with saying in general, of my own Knowledge, That the *Transactions* of *Reformation* here having been, near *Two Years* since, laid before some few Persons in *Ireland*, and most of those (I must again observe) *private Persons*, and of the *lower Rank* of Men, with proper Considerations to move 'em to unite in the same Design, and Methods to pursue it with Advantage, it determined them to engage heartily in it: and they have prosecuted it with so much Vigour, that there are now several *Societies for Reformation* in the City of *Dublin*, which I am assured, by divers Accounts that I have in my hands from thence, are spreading into several Parts of the Kingdom, and are encouraged by his Excellency the Earl of *Galloway*, (one of the Lords Justices of *Ireland*) the Right Reverend the *Arch-Bishop* of *Dublin*, many of the *Clergy*, and the best of the *Magistrates* and *Gentlemen* of that City: In One of which *Societies*, most of the *Parish-Ministers* of *Dublin*, several of the pious *Bishops*, particularly the celebrated *Arch-Bishop*, and divers other Persons of *Quality*, are Members; some of whom have shewn

a Zeal, which if it prevailed the Three Kingdoms over, might soon produce a glorious Reverse of the State they are now in, and which in less than *Two Years* space hath succeeded, tho' not without such various Oppositions as might be expected from Combinations of bad Men, to that degree in *Dublin*, that the *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, by *Tipling* in publick Houses, by Exercising of *Trade*, and Exposing of *Goods* to Sale, is almost suppressed; that *Lewd Women* are so strictly enquired after, and severely punished, that they have transported themselves, as in *England*, to our Plantations; and that *Swearing* is so run down, that an Oath is rarely heard in their Streets; so that publick Disorders are remarkably cured, and, in short, Vice is afraid and ashamed to shew its head, where within a few Years past it was daring and triumphant.

We are likewise assured, That *Scotland* hath concurred in these Matters, where His Majesty's *Proclamation* against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery* hath been issued out in very strict terms, and His late Gracious *Letter* to the *Parliament* of that Kingdom takes notice of the *Progress* that they have made in the *Forming* of *Methods* for the Discouraging of *Vice* and *Irreligion*, and assures them, *That 'tis a WORK most acceptable to Him.*

But to return to our own Nation. We are made acquainted, That many *Societies* and *Bodies* of Men, of different *Ranks* and *Perswasions*, are engaged in this Work, to which Men of *Virtue*, of *Temper*, and unblemished *Reputation*, may either join themselves, according to their *Quality*, *Circumstances*, or *Opportunities*, or may form

form themselves into *new Bodies*: That the publick Opposition that was made to it, which our Posterity may blush to read of, is at an end, which, 'tis to be hoped, will be the last that we shall hear of in a Christian State, and under a Protestant Government: That the City of *London* espouses it, where there are *Two Sermons Quarterly Preached*, and divers of them Printed, to make Men sensible of their Obligations in this respect. And it's true also, That *Swearing* is much lessened, as we have reason to believe, by the Accounts we receive in most, if not in all Parts of the Kingdom, as other publick Disorders are in many; and that *Societies for Reformation* have been in divers Places already actually form'd, and are going on in many others; as particularly in *Gloucester, Leicester, Coventry, Shrewsbury, Hull, Nottingham, Tamworth, Newcastle, Chester*, and several other Corporations; so that in a few Months time, by the Methods that are now taking, there is reason to believe, that we shall hear of a very considerable Progress in this Work from all Parts of the Nation. And now is this a time for Men that would be reckoned Christians, to stand Neuters in an Affair wherein their Religion, their Country, and their Posterity, are so deeply concerned? Let the Men who can contentedly see the Laws of God trampled upon; who can, in their ordinary Conversation, in the Streets, and even at their own Tables, hear horrid Oaths and Curses, nay, Men calling upon God for Damnation upon themselves and others; in a word, offering high Indignities to the Glorious Majesty of their Great Creator, consider, whether the very Heathens, who would not suffer their Artificial Deities to

be affronted, or their Religion to be despis'd ; who, in Sieges, and other Distresses from their Enemies, were more concerned for their Images and Alrars than for their own Houses, or private Affairs, do not condemn them ? Let our Learned Rabbies, the great Disputers of the World, and all that make a Profession of Religion, but give little better account of it than by expressing a fierce and uncharitable Heat against those that differ from them in some things relating to Religion, but not essential to it, and wherein all Men equally wise and good have, I doubt, never yet been fully agreed, think seriously with themselves, whether they might not employ some share at least of their Parts and Zeal to much better purpose, in furthering the Reformation of Mens Lives, and of the Manners of the Nation, by the Suppressing of Prophaneness and Vice, than by raising or keeping up, with an unchristian Temper, to the manifest Injury of the Christian Religion, which is an Institution of Love, dangerous or unnecessary Controversies or Divisions, and making of Profelytes to their new Opinions or Party ; all Religions being, I think, agreed, that bad Men are a Scandal to the best Religion, and that they cannot, if they continue so, be saved in any ; and consequently, that the being instrumental in the bringing over of a few Souls to the sincere Practice of Piety and Virtue by any Christian Methods, (which those I am treating of will, I hope, be allowed to be) is of greater Service to the Christian Religion and the World, than the gaining of hundreds that are vicious to any particular Church or Party. But can Men of Conscience satisfy themselves with complaining of the Iniquities of the Age, and wishing for Reformation,

with

with giving only some good Words to these Proceedings, or even Praying for God's Blessing upon them, without doing, as they have Opportunity, what is necessary to promote them, when, as it hath been said, we have the Laws of God, of the Nation, and, as we have reason to hope, the Government on our side; and moreover so many Examples and so great Success to encourage us, and have now, generally speaking, not much more to fear than Calumnies and hard Words, and most of those, 'tis to be hoped, from the Enemies of God and Goodness, which the best of Men, and the best Designs in all Ages, have ever met with, and which, in such a Case, it is our true Glory to suffer? No, surely this is a Time, as I shall endeavour to make appear, for all good Men to join their Hearts and Hands, their Interest and Authority, in this so Necessary, so Great, and so Glorious a Work.

Having now laid before the Reader a short Scheme of this Undertaking, which was begun with great Opposition, in a Time that was discouraging to such an Enterprize, and with such other circumstances of disadvantage, as new things, be they never so wise and good, especially Attempts of this kind, generally meet with, and yet hath been advanced to such a considerable degree, from so contemptible a Beginning, as it must appear to have had to the Wise and the Wary among us, who do not duly consider, that there is a God that rules in the Kingdoms of Men, and who, as the Prophet expresses it, *giveth Power to the faint; Isa. 40. 29. and to them that have no Might increaseth Strength.* And having in general recommended it to all Persons to give their Assistance in it, my next Business is to enquire, whether there are any Or-

ders of Men among us, who are under more particular Obligations to be zealous and diligent in Promoting a publick Reformation of Manners.

Of the Cler- And, in the first place, I humbly ask leave to
gies Obliga- lay this Matter before the most Reverend Order
tions to pro- of the Clergy, beseeching them, with all that due
mote a Re- Respect which all good Men ought to have to
formation of their High and Holy Function, to consider, if
Manners. what is endeavoured to be proved to be the Com-

mon Duty of all Men, and the Special Obligation
of Kings, Governours, and Magistrates, be indeed
so, it is not the particular Province of those, who
have entred into the Places of Overseers and Watch-
men ; and of whom the Blood of those that die in
their Sins, if they knowingly suffer them to sleep in
them, will be required, to teach and inculcate these
Duties as well as others. And if any of their Body,
after this Matter is plainly laid before them, and
they are convinced 'tis their Duty to be diligent in
the furthering it, wilfully neglect to excite those
belonging to their Charge, and especially Magi-
strates and inferior Officers, who are obliged by
solemn Oaths to do their part in promoting, in
their respective Stations, the Execution of the
Laws against Prophaneness and Debauchery, they
can give a good Account of their Conduct to those
of their particular Charge, who have no concern
to discharge their Oath and Duty herein, only for
want of their being admonished of it, and are not
Partakers, in some degree, in the common Guilt
of the Nation, which, as our Neglect of our Duty
in this particular Instance, of not Promoting a Re-
formation, will encrease ; so it may be a means,
notwithstanding our present respite from Destru-
ction, to draw down God's Judgments upon the
Kingdom,

Act. 20.28.
Ezek. 3.17,
18, 20.

Kingdom, if we continue to make no better use of the Peace we have with our Neighbours, than to fight, with our crying Enormities, against our God; which, as I think, few Nations, if any, have had, in these last Ages, greater reason to dread; so, I suppose, all will grant, that none seem to have greater reason to use all proper means to prevent, than those who expect to give Account not only for their own Sins, but *for the Sins of so many others besides, if they wilfully suffer them to perish in them, by their refusing to use the necessary means of preventing their living and dying in them.*

I shall not, after I have humbly represented this Affair to this Sacred Order, think fit to enquire whether there hath been any Neglect on the Part of their Body, or any one Member of it, in a matter wherein Religion is so highly concerned: I ask leave rather to say, That I am assured, upon unquestionable Information, that most of the Right Reverend the Bishops have expressed their Approbation of the *Societies of Reformation* I have given an account of; that I have never heard of the Name of any one of these Reverend Persons that hath not done it upon an humble Application made to them for their Countenance and Encouragement of them; and that divers of them, to my own certain Knowledge, have promoted them, and continue to do it, as a considerable Number of the Clergy in and about this City, as well as in other Parts of the Kingdom, have done likewise; some of them by Preaching, and frequently meeting to consult one another upon this Occasion; and others of them by giving Informations themselves to the Magistrates against prophane Persons; among

mong whom, the generous and remarkable Assistance that was given in this Affair by the two late Eminent Divines, Dr. *Horneck* and Dr. *Jekell*, whose Deaths are so much lamented, under the various Obstructions and Discouragements they encountred in the Prosecution of it, which those pious Men made such dismal Reflections upon, as I shall under our present Circumstances forbear to repeat, does demand a particular Acknowledgement in this place, and deserves to be transmitted to after-Ages, when the Names of such as discourage Endeavours of *Reformation* may either be forgot, or be remembered with Ignominy. And I not only submit what I have said on this Head of the *Clergy*, and this whole *Discourse*, to This Reverend Body, which, I think, I shall never obtain of my self to Publish without the Approbation of some of the pious Members of it; but out of a sense of my own Defects, and the tenderest regard I would always have to matters of Religion, I heartily desire, if I am ever prevailed on to publish it, a publick Correction from them of any thing I have said in these Papers through Weakness or Inadvertency; (which, I hope, all the Advantages of the World would not have prevailed on me, if they could have been offered me, to have said knowingly) that may not be warranted from the Holy Scriptures, or that does give Offence to any but those whom the Representation of their Sin, or their Duty to them, and Religion it self offends; whose Sentiments of this Discourse as I have no reason to ask, their Censures of it I may know how to value.

And I must the rather make this humble and solemn Address to them for a speedy Censure of these

these Papers, if there is any just Occasion for it; and that at the same time they would be pleased to put this glorious Cause, that I have here represented with no more Skill, in a better light, which, I conceive, would well become the most celebrated Writers of the Age to do, not only because Errors in general, as well as Diseases, are better prevented than cured after they are spread; but because upon a long Consideration and a full Knowledge I have had of the *Undertaking* I have treated of, and of the *Steps* by which it hath been carried on from the very Beginning, I cannot but believe that the Virtuous Part of the Nation, when it is laid before them, will conclude that there is abundant reason for their Concurrence and Assistance in it, and will think, that either the Happiness or Misery of this Kingdom may with great ground be expected from either the Success or the Discouragement that these and other pious and just Endeavours for a *National Reformation* meet with. My Business, in the next place, is to consider the *Magistrates Obligation* to be diligent in the *Execution of the Laws* against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*.

It will, I think, be allowed, That Government *Of the su-*
is of Divine Appointment, and that the Power of *pream and*
Magistrates, whether it be that of the Supream *subordinate*
or that of those that are Inferior and Subordinate, *Magistrates*
is derived originally from God. St. Paul speak- *Obligations.*
ing of the Magistrate, says, he is the Minister of
God to thee for Good. There is no Power but of God: *Rom. 13. 4.*
The Powers that be, are ordained of God. And Moses *Rom. 13. 1.*
speaking to the Judges of the People of Israel,
says, Hear the Causes between your Brethren, and *Deuter. 1.*
Judge righteously between every Man and his Bro- *16, 17.*
ther. Ye shall not respect Persons in Judgment, but
you

2 Chron.
19. 6.

Ner. 9.

1 Pet. 2.
13, 14.

1 Tim. 2.
1, 2.

you shall hear the Small as well as the Great ; you shall not be afraid of the Face of Man, for the Judgment is Gods. Take heed (said Jehoshaphat to his Judges) what ye do : for ye judge not for Man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the Judgment. Wherefore now, let the Fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it : for there is no Iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of Persons, nor taking of Gifts. Thus shall ye do in the Fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect Heart. From whence we may, I think conclude, without adding any further Proof of what is so generally confest, that Magistrates do act by God's Authority, are his Ministers or Instruments, which he maketh what use of he pleases in the Governing the Natural and Rational World that they are to act for his Honour, and the Good of his People ; and that He will call them to account for their Behaviour in this respect. Accordingly, for Kings, and for all that are in Authority, the Apostle does particularly direct, That Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks be made, that under them we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty. For our King therefore, and all sorts of Magistrates, does it not behove us to pray, That God would be pleased to inspire them with Zeal for his Glory, and the Good of his People, and particularly to direct and assist them in this necessary and most weighty Affair of Reformation ?

*Subordinate
Magistrates
are obliged
by their Of-
fice and a
solemn Oath*

And as the Magistrate's Power is primarily and originally from God ; so is the Office and Power of Subordinate Magistrates immediately and visibly conferred upon them as a weighty Trust, by their Prince, and their Country, which they have an Obligation to the faithful Discharge of,

of, in their natural Allegiance and Fidelity; but *to execute* this Obligation rises yet higher; they are bound *the Laws* yet closer to the faithful Discharge of their Office *against Prophaneness* by a *Solemn Oath*, relating to their particular *and Immorality* Trust, as well as by the *Oath of Allegiance*. Now the Obligation being thus great and various must, I think, necessarily draw the dreadful Guilt of Perjury, as well as Breach of Trust, upon those, who being thus entrusted and obliged to execute the Laws, do wilfully neglect to do their Duty: For a Justice of the Peace takes this Solemn Oath at his Entrance into that Office:

That in the County of _____ in all Articles Dalton's *in the King's Commission to him directed, he shall* Country *do legal Right to the Poor, and to the Rich, after* Justice, p. *his Cunning, Wit, and Power, and after the Laws* 13. c. 4. *and Customs of the Realm, and the Statutes thereof made, &c.* Wherein he is first obliged to do Right, which regards very much the Punishment of Offenders, as appears more fully in his Commission; and this equally reaches Rich and Poor, The whole County is assign'd in the Oath, as the Extent of his Jurisdiction, and therefore his Authority is not confin'd to a part; he is not tied up to act only in any lesser district of it; but is to issue out his Warrants against Offenders upon Informations offered him by Persons that live never so remote from him in the County, or for Offences committed in any part of it; which, tho' tis so obvious from the very Words both of the Oath and Commission, I thought fit to take Notice of, lest if we should have any Magistrates that should think it too much to give themselves the Trouble to look into the Disorders of any kind that are committed even in their own Parishes, to suppress them when they

they hear or observe them any-where else; as *Swearing and Cursing*, for Instance, in *Bowling-Greens, Coffee-Houses*, and other publick Places; *Drunkennes, Lewdness*, and *Prophanation* of the *Lord's-Day* in the *Taverns* and *Streets*; or that should unwillingly receive Informations from others of them, they should, in either of these Cases, be tempted to think those worthy Magistrates too officious, and take the Liberty to speak of them as such, who, by inspecting into these Disorders, where-ever they hear of them, in any part of the County, and by giving Encouragement to those that bring them Informations of such Offences, (which will in consequence draw a more than ordinary Attendance upon them of such Persons on this Occasion as live at a distance from them) will thereby make their Unfaithfulness in their Office the more remarkable. He is obliged to *do Justice, according to the Laws, Statutes, and Customs of the Realm*. He is not then to break the Laws himself, or to suffer others with Impunity to break them. He is to discharge his Office according to his *Understanding and Ability*: But can any be supposed to be of such weak Abilities, as not to know that Offenders ought to be punished, when legal Informations are offered them, or when Offences are committed before them? If then any Magistrates can discourage those who are so much Friends to their Country, as to bring them Informations against Offenders, can refuse to convict upon them, or can see and hear one another break God's Laws, and the Laws of their Country, at their Diversion, and their own Tables; what is more directly contrary to their Office and Trust? What becomes of the Oaths that are upon them? In how many
Instances

Instances do they notoriously break them? And if the Violation of a Private Trust is justly esteemed base and detestable, how much higher Aggravations must their Offences admit of, who break a Publick one, so Solemnly taken upon them? And certainly Perjury, that is of so black a nature in its self, is not a less Enormity, or less Infamous, in a Magistrate, than it is in one of an inferior Order.

The Commission for a Justice of the Peace also sets forth, *That he is to conserve the Peace in such Dalton's or such a County, and to keep, as well as cause to be Justice, pag. kept, all Ordinances and Statutes made for the Good 18. cap. 5. of the Peace, and the Conservation thereof, and for the Quiet, Rule and Government of His Majesty's People, and in all and every the Articles thereof, according to the Force, Form, and Effect thereof, to chastise and punish all Persons in the said County offending against the Form of these Ordinances and Statutes, or any of them in the County, &c.*

It deserves our Observation, That as the * Ro- * Populus man Government, the ‡ Lacedæmonian and Romanus ‖ Athenian Common-Wealths, provided by their delegit Ma- gistratus, quasi Reipublicæ Villicos, in quibus siqua præterea est ars, facile patitur, si minus virtute eorum & innocentia contentus est, Tull. Or.

‡ Virtus in primis apud Lacedæmonios circa Magistratus legendos semper spectata. Quod Politicum præceptum in quavis Republica servari ex usu esset, Nic. Crag. de Repub. Laced. p. 83.

‖ Inter præcipuos Atheniensium Magistratus censendi sunt annui Novemviri. Oportebat in eorum vitam inquiri, antequam Magistratum capefferent, Pet. de Leg. Atticis 236. Tantam honestatis curam his Novemviris voluit esse Solon, ut si quis Archon vino se ingurgitaverit, capital ei fuerit ex hac lege. Ταῦτ' ἄρχοντι μὴ μεθύων ἀρπύην δάσκατον ἐστὶν ἡ ζημία. Jurabant in leges se esse observaturos Novemviri. Jusjurandum Novemvirorum: Leges observabo, quod si secus fecero, auream statuum meam æqui ponderis pendam, Pet. de Leg. Atticis 140. Ἀρχόντες ὁμνύετε δικαίως ἀρχεῖν καὶ δῶρα μὴ δέχεσθαι, &c. Heracl. Pont. de Polit. Athen.

Laws against ill Magistrates; kept, when they flourished, vicious Men out of their Magistracy, and entrusted those with the Execution of their Laws that would shew such a Behaviour to others as they expected from them. So our Government hereby strictly requires the Magistrates to give a good Example. 'Tis a mighty force that Example hath; one can hardly conceive any thing, on the one hand, so foolish and unaccountable; and on the other, so difficult and brave, as that Men may not in a great degree be led to by it. Good Example hath often the Advantage of Humane Precept, of Admonition or Reproof, and sometimes of the Exercise of publick Justice, or private Authority, which, besides that they are not always practicable, have often too little Influence upon the Mind; but good Example hath a great and secret Charm to draw others to Imitation. It attracts and assimilates by a Power, of which we cannot give a full Account, tho' by shewing Virtue as it were visibly, it hath undeniably thereby a great Advantage of other Methods of Instruction; * those things being allowed to make a much deeper and longer Impression upon our Minds that are represented to us by our Eyes, than those that are admitted by our Ears. Precepts, tho' they are in the general not only highly useful, but necessary, are not always clear, and when they are understood, the Efficacy of them, of Admonition and Reproof, seems often to be more or less, according to the Example of them that give them; such Persons are look'd on as a Reproach to Religion, and unquestionably do often give bad Men a further Aversion and Prejudice to it, that do not practise themselves what they recommend in their Discourses. As
the

* *Segnius
irritant a-
nimos di-
missa per
aures, quàm
quæ oculis
subjecta fi-
delibus.*

the Christian Religion does therefore strictly oblige all its Profelytes to shew a good Example, by a strict Observance of its Precepts; so it does more-especially inculcate upon those whose particular Office it is to teach others their Duty, their endeavouring to perswade them to it by their own good Example, as well as by their Doctrine, *that they may thereby both save themselves, and those* 1 Tim. 4. *that hear them*; and when this is wanting, *when* 16. *they say but do not*, how exceedingly mischievous Mat. 23. 3. the consequences of it are, highly deserves serious Consideration. The Heathen Moralists could observe the great Mischief that was done the World by mercenary Masters of Precept, by whom they meant, those * *that endeavoured to* * τὰ δίκαια *talk elegantly of just things, but not to do them*; μὴ ἰσχυρὰ and that it was not the Discourses, but the good κέναι λέγειν, Examples; not the Schools, but the Manners of πράττειν δὲ Philosophers, that made their best Disciples δεικνύσας. what they were, and so much celebrated. * *I knew* (says Plato) Socrates by his good Works more than by his good Words; || and he makes it a necessary quality of a good Orator, *that he himself be Just and Virtuous*. † And accordingly Socrates (his Master) being asked what he thought to be the best Instruction, answered, *Eupraxie*, or well-doing. Example hath indeed such a Power, that Men are in a great degree too often such as those are with whom they converse, as even the Proverbs of many Nations have observed: So that he that gives a good

* Σωκράτης δὲ ἐξ τῶν μὴ λόγων ἐκ ἔμπειρής εἰμι· ἀλλὰ πράττον, ὡς εἶπες ὅτι ἔργον ἱππευδῶ, καὶ ἐκεῖ, &c. Plat. Laches p. 487.

|| 'Οὐκ ἐν ἀνάγκῃ ἢ ῥητορικὸν δίκαιον εἶναι, ἢ δὲ δίκαιον βέλτεον, δίκαια πράττειν, Pl. Gorg. f. 460.

† 'Εθρῶν δὲ τινὶ αὐτὸν τὸ δοκοῖν αὐτῷ κατῆστον αἰδεῖσθαι τήδευμα εἶναι, ἀπικρινάτω δὲ πράξιαν, Stob. fol. 49.

Example, tho' he be but a private Person, does in truth a publick Service, and lays an Obligation upon the Age he lives in: But the good Examples of *Governours* and *Magistrates* (I need not add of *Ministers*) have a far greater force of Perswasion; their Virtues are generally derived by Imitation into the Manners of the People.

* *Quales summi civitatis viri fuerint, talis civitas erit.*

Ut enim vitiis & sceleribus Principum infici solet & corrumpi tota Respublica, ita corrigi & emendari. τὴν αὐτὴν παρὰ τὸν νόμον ἀποδείγμα τοῖς ἄλλοις καὶ δίδωμι, γινώσκων ὅτι τὸ τῆς πόλεως ὅλης ἢ τοῦ ὁμοῦ ἐστὶ τοῖς ἀρχαῖς. Nec ignores totius civitatis mores ad exemplum Magistratum conformari, *Isoc. Oratio ad Nicoclem, p. 41.*

* How fatal an Influence more-especially must then the vicious Examples, which the corrupt Nature of Man does with so much ease comply with, of Superiors, of Persons in Authority, whose particular Province it is to look to the Execution of the Laws, have upon those below them? These Men carry not only those of their Neighbourhood, but a great

part of the Counties they live in, after them; many of whom, 'tis very obvious, are apt to think it an Excuse, if not a Warrant, to transgress after their Example. The Commission of a Justice of Peace does therefore with great reason tell him, *That he is to keep himself, as well as cause to be kept, all the Ordinances and Statutes,*

* *Sine bonitate nulla Majestas.*

Ἄρχῃσιν ἡ ὀφειλόμεναι αἰδώς καὶ τιμὴ φυλακισμένη, κόσμον σώζει πόλεως καὶ διατηρεῖ.

Ec. As his giving a good Example is a likely way to procure a due regard to his Office, to maintain his Authority, and with the Exercise of it to reform others; so, on the contrary, his giving a bad Example is as effectual a course to teach others to break the Laws, * and to bring a Contempt upon his Office, and the Government it self, as can easily be thought of. I needed not to have been thus long upon this head of

Example,

Example, and particularly the *malignant Influence* of the bad Examples of Magistrates and great Men, if most Ages did not abound with such unhappy Instances; and if this Nation in particular had not felt so much the fatal Effects of them, as may be some Excuse for my insisting on it. But to go on. Besides the Mischief that is done by the vicious Examples of Magistrates, with what reason can we expect, that those that make no Conscience to break the Laws, should diligently and conscientiously execute the Laws upon others? And supposing such Magistrates should sometimes, either out of a fear of the Inspection of the Government into their Behaviour, in the Reign of a Prince that is zealous in the Discouraging of Vice, or out of a desire of keeping up their Reputation with better Men, be sometimes enclined to punish such Offences in others as they themselves are guilty of, consciousness of their own Faults will, when they act upon no better and firmer Principles, deprive them of Courage, and be very apt, upon many Occasions, to draw them back from the Punishing of others, especially when the Offenders are either their Superiors or Equals, whereas the Law knows no respect of Persons; and they whose Business it is to execute it, must do it without Distinction or Partiality. Their Commission tells them, that they are *to chastise and punish all Persons in the said County offending*. And can any that consider this, That we live under a Christian Government, and that the Apostle acquaints us, That the Magistrate *is the Minister Rom. 13. 3. of God for Good: That he beareth not the Sword Ver. 4. in vain: Is a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him 1 Pet. 2. that does Evil:* and that Christians should have a 13, 14,

far greater Concern for the Honour of God, than for the Honour of their Prince, their own Reputation or Estates, but think, that the Laws that relate to Piety and Virtue are to be chiefly regarded by the Magistrate; that his principal Care should be applied to the restraining Men, even those of the highest Rank, from openly breaking those Laws, by a strict and impartial Execution of them, since the reasonableness of the Punishing of Men for the Violations of Religion seems to have been evident by the Light of Nature? It being, I think, a just Observa-

* *Adversus maleficium omne consensus. Homicidii, veneficii, parricidii, violatarum Religionum alicubi atque alicubi diversa poena est: sed ubique aliqua. Sen. de Ben. lib. 3. c. 6.*

tion of the Heathen Philosopher, * *That tho' several Nations do appoint several Punishments for the Violation of Religion, yet it does not in any Country go wholly unpunished. No Mens Quality ought to shelter them from Punishment*

in this Case; even *Privilege of Parliament* does not give those who are allowed it for the Service of their Country, the mischievous Liberty to trample upon the Laws of God and their Country, nor will excuse Magistrates from acting according to their Oaths in these Matters. Charity, and good Manners would forbid us, if such a Case had never been heard of, or was like to happen, to suppose that this Privilege should ever be pretended, on such an Occasion, by any

* *Receptumq; omnium pene Gentium, temporumque memoria, ut ad legum latarum observantiam invitarentur inferioris fortis homines, exemplo potentum, qui primi eas custodire*

one of those Bodies, who, as they * *make Laws against Debauchery and Prophaneness, ought likewise to endeavour, by their own Exemplary Behaviour, to promote Piety and good*

good Manners, to give Laws of Civility to the rest of the Nation; and to add, that if these things do happen, good Magistrates, 'tis to be hoped, will act as become them. And there is, I think, no doubt but the bringing to legal Punishment a Man of Title or Authority, that makes use of his Power or Interest to be more vicious, and to do greater Mischief to the World than others, is a greater Service to Religion and our Country, and more highly honourable among Men, than the punishing of a private Person, perhaps than many poor Creatures, † who, as hath been long observed, generally suffer the Extremity of the Law for such Offences as their Necessities are a Temptation to them, tho' not a Reason for them, to commit; when great Men, that cheat whole Provinces, and bid defiance to Sacred things, go unpunished, if they are not rewarded. * If History can tell

alterum, voluit erui oculum. *Her. Pont. de Pol. Tenediorum.*

Legem quandam Tenediis tulit Tennes, quâ licebat, Adulterum deprehensum securi necare: Quum itaque filius ejus esset captus, interrogante regem qui ceperat, Quid ei faciendum? Respondebat, Lege utendum: quapropter & nummo ejus ab una parte securis excusa, ab altera facies viri & mulieris uno collo juncta. *Her. Pont. de Pol. Locrorum,*

cogebantur, & præsertim illi ipsi qui eas tulissent.

Magistratus, Gubernatores, Regesque obediunt quoque ipsi legibus. *Rosin. è Diod. Sic.*

Sua lege docuit, nil aliud præcipi debere, nisi quod prius quisque sibi imperaverit. *Val. Max. lib. 8. c. 6. Tit. 3.*

Τέτοις εἶναι χρὴ καὶ τῆς ἀλλης ὑμᾶς, οἷόν περ ἐμὲ ὑμᾶς ἀξίετο γίνεσθαι, *Isoc. ad Nic. p. 71.*

Præceptum salubre Pittacis sapientis apud Ausonium: Pareto legi quisque legem sanxeris. *Rosinus de Ant. Rom.*

† Zaleucus Legislator aiebat, arenarum telis leges esse similes; nam sicut in illas si musca aut culex inciderit, retinetur; si vero vespa aut apex, disrupta tela avolat: Ita legibus pauperes detinentur, ditiores & eloquentes elabuntur. *Heraclides.*

Ille crucem pretium sceleris tulit, hic diadema. *Juven.*

* Si quis convictus furti esset apud Locrenses, effodiebantur ei oculi. Contigit autem ut Zalenci filius furti reus convictiaretur; cui quum Locrenses poenam remitterent, non tulit id pater, sed sibi unum, filio

alterum, voluit erui oculum. *Her. Pont. de Pol. Tenediorum.*

* Pudet
hæc oppro-
bria nobis
Et dici po-
tuisse, &
non potu-
isse refelli.

Of the Zeal
and Dili-
gence of
some of our
worthy Ma-
gistrates.

us of Heathens that could do and suffer so much for the Maintenance of the Laws of their Country, shall it be supposed that the fear of disobliging a Man of Interest, that hath a swelling Title, one that is I doubt, improperly called a Man of Honour, who affronts and contemns Religion, should keep Christian Magistrates from Executing the Laws of their Country, that are made for the Support of Religion, and to which they are Sworn? And yet, as unworthy and unaccountable as such a Behaviour may appear to be, even by the Light of Nature, *it were well, if for the Honour of Christian Magistrates, nay, even of Humane Nature, that it could be denied, that many, I am unwilling to say most of the Magistrates in the late Reigns, lived and died with their Commissions, without putting any one of the Laws, that our more virtuous Ancestors had left us against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, in Execution, which some of the worthy Magistrates of this Reign, making a Conscience of Discharging the Oaths they have taken, and the Trust that is reposed in them, by their Personal Watchfulness and Diligence, as well as by their giving due Encouragement to those who, without having Oaths to oblige them, or Rewards to encourage them, bring them Informations of the Breaches of those Laws, which were grown almost obsolete and useless, have, to their great Honour, so successfully done, with such opposition and difficulty; and not only with greater Clamour from hardened Offenders, but with more Reflection from too many others, than they might have met with if they had been breaking them in the most impudent manner, had been making Attempts to
destroy

destroy them. To prevent therefore, for the future, the Mischief that this Nation may otherwise fall under, as it hath done, by the Unfaithfulness of Magistrates, it may deserve Consideration, whether it would not be highly advisable, * that, as we are told, the *Romans* for this rea- * Cogunt eos qui Magi-
 son ordered their Magistrates to give an Account of their Diligence for the Maintenance of the stratu abie-
 Laws to their Censors, † a chief part of whose rint, apud
 Office it was, to look to a Reformation of Man- Censores e-
 ners; and as our Magistrates are, by the late dere & ex-
Act of Parliament against Swearing and Cursing, primere
 required to keep Lists of those Persons that they quid in Ma-
 have convicted of those Offences, and to return gistratu
 them to the Sessions; our Magistrates should gesserint.
 be likewise further obliged, to bring in to our *Gothofredus*
 Judges of Assize, or to the Quarter-Sessions, Lists *de duo. Ta-*
 of such as they have convicted upon all the Sta- *bul. Frag.*
 tutes against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, which † Censo-
 Method will, I humbly conceive, not only be rum Offi-
 effectual for the quickening the Diligence of cium erat
 Magistrates, but give a just Terror to Offenders, describere
 and will afford the Government a means of facultates
 knowing what Magistrates are Unfaithful in vis, obser-
 their Office, ‡ and deserve Discountenance and vare singu-
 Punishment; and, on the contrary, who they are gulorum
 that most honourably discharge their Trusts, do hominum
 the greatest Service to their Country, and de- mores & vi-
 tam, tollere
 quoque omnia quæ probitati morum pestem & perniciem illatura
 videbantur. *Rosinus de Antiquitatibus Rom. fol. 520.*

Censores mores populi regunto. Hæc detur cura Censoribus, quandoquidem eos in Republica semper volumus esse, *Cicero de Leg. p. 340.*

‡ His autem duobus, præmiis & pœna, salus Reipublicæ quamplurimum continetur. Solon Rempublicam duabus rebus contineri dixit præmio & pœna, *Cic. ad B. Ep. 272.*

*The Re-
straining of
Men from
open Vice
and Pro-
phaneness a
great Bene-
fit of Magi-
stracy, and
of great use
to particu-
lar Persons.*

*A mighty
Advantage
to the Cause
of Religion
in general.*

*Deut. 13.
11.*

serve the highest Regard from it. And can any, unless they are faithful and zealous Ministers of the Gospel, be supposed to deserve more Respect than those Magistrates that conscientiously apply themselves to the Suppressing of Vice and Prophaneness, and to the Promoting of Religion? As the doing of this is, I conceive, one of the greatest Benefits of Magistracy, and may be supposed, as hath been shewn, to be a great End for which it was appointed, so it can't, I think, be doubted, but that God's Blessing may attend his Ordinance, the Magistrates zealous and united Endeavours for this purpose, so that they may succeed to the Spiritual good of particular Persons, as well as to the good of the Publick; that as Afflictions are often sent by him, to awaken Men out of their Lethargy in their vicious Courses, and in the nature of them tend to that end, the legal Corrections of Offenders, which may be looked on as Afflictions, may, with God's Blessing, work the same happy Effect upon them; and the rather, since they are the immediate and sensible Effects of their Sins; and of this, we are told, there have been so many happy Instances since the beginning of these Transactions, as may be sufficient, without other Considerations, to encourage the Magistrates Diligence: But when this fails of the desired Success upon particular Persons, yet it is a vast Advantage to the Cause of Religion in general, to keep the Multitude, by the strict and Exemplary Punishment of some Offenders, from the publick Commission of such scandalous Sins as wast the Conscience, affront Religion, and directly tend to bring it into Contempt, that, as the Scripture expresses it, *All Israel may hear, and fear, and do no more any such Wicked-*

Wickedness. For considering the Original Corruption of our Nature, which is generally more depraved by our Education in a degenerate Age; that being thus depraved and weakned, we find it no very easie work to resist Temptations to Sins, to which we have either habituated our selves, or have a natural propensity, when they are naked and alone; and that 'tis much more difficult to encounter those Sins when Temptations to them are made stronger by the bad and eminent Examples which are almost every-where to be seen in our Commerce with the World, there being but few that we meet with that do not recommend one Vice or other by their Example to our Imitation, and (which is, I think, still worse) most of those not such as profess themselves Enemies of Religion, but that pretend themselves Christians, entertain hopes of receiving the Benefits of Religion, and attend its Ordinances with Allowance, as often as they think it for their Interest or Reputation to do so; considering, I say, these things, have we not great reason to fear, that most Men will continue to go over to the major Party, that triumph in Wickedness, and that few will have the Courage and Bravery to join with the lesser and too much despised Party of Virtue, to go against the Stream of a Debauched Age, (which, for ought I can see, there is greater likelihood that it should still grow more strong and furious, than that it should abate) till frequent and publick Examples of Vice are taken out of publick View by either the Execution of our Civil Laws, or by the Revival of the ancient Discipline of the Church. *Seneca* it seems could observe, That it was enough to shake the Resolution of a *Socrates*, or a *Cato*,
to

to bear up against and stem Vice, when it becomes so general and fashionable, that it presses upon us, with a kind of publick Authority. And tho' Christians have a clearer Revelation than those Heathens had of their Duty, higher Obligations, nobler Motives, and greater Assistances to perform it, yet, I conceive, our Religion does not teach us, nor our own Experience of Humane Frailty does not encourage us to make the way to our Duty and Happiness as difficult as we can. 'Tis true, as may be objected, that Men are by no means to be supposed Religious, who are restrained from their Vices only by sense of Shame, or fear of Humane Punishment; but yet they must be thought to be in a much fairer way of being so under those Restraints, than they would be without them. By their being kept by Humane Laws from an Indulgence of their vicious Inclinations, they may in time find the Pleasure and the Advantage of the Restraint: And bad Examples and Temptations, that abound in most places, which are the great Occasions of Sin, being by this means taken away, Vice will become scandalous, and Virtue will be in proportion esteemed fashionable: and thus, I think, very great points are gained. For when Men that are vicious in their Inclinations, and even those that are grown old in Sensuality, see plainly that Religion gives Men Esteem and Advantage, as Debauchery and Irreligion hath too much done within our Memory, and they find that the Stream is turned, and bears hard against them, that they cannot commit their Disorders with Impunity, nor without Shame; and moreover, Temptations to them are very much taken out of the way, then they will take some pains to be Virtuous, at least

Qui vitat
peccatum,
vitat occa-
siones pec-
candi.

least to appear in the Dress of Virtue ; then may we hope that such Men will begin to enquire into the Nature and Reasons of Religion, and when they moreover find, by a sober Advertence to its Proposals, (which they will now make with less Prejudice) and by some Experience they will have of the happy Effects, of it, by their endeavouring to imitate it, that it prohibits us those things that would be most highly injurious to us, and allows a Satisfaction to our rational Appetites ; that it hath such Excellencies as outbid and put out of Countenance all the Advantages that the World can offer ; that it fortifies us against the cross Occurrences and Calamities, the Changes and Storms of Life, and the Fears of Death, disarms it of its Stings and Terrours ; to say no more, that it silences the bitter Remonstrances and stinging Reproaches of Conscience, delivers us from Plagues and Fears, Confusion and Sorrow, from the tormenting Guilt and the cruel Usurpation and Outrages of our Lusts and Passions, and gives us in Exchange the noble Pleasure of the Victory over our selves, who are our worst Masters, the Joys of Innocence, the Triumphs of a good Conscience, and the Extasies of Heavenly Hopes, and directs us to the Regions of Bliss, to *Joys unspeakable and everlasting* : Then may it be that the good Dispositions, which we may call the Seeds of Virtue, which seemed before as it were choak'd in some with ill Habits, may (with God's Blessing) be awakened, and revive ; and that others, who had some weak Inclinations to Religion, but had not strength enough to bear the Contempt that now too often, if not generally attends the sincere Practice of it, to go in an untrodden

*The Re-
straining of
Men from
Prophane-
ness and
Vice necessa-
ry to the
Welfare of
the Publick.*

untrodden way, against the Tyranny of Custom and Example, may take courage: Then may we hope to see Virtue, that hath been so long flighted and oppressed, drawn out of its Obscurity, delivered from that Contempt which the Prevalency and Insolence of Sin hath flung upon it, and imbittered it, be admired, embraced, and enthroned. So that the Magistrates taking away out of publick View Examples of *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, by a strict Execution of the Laws, seems as proper, if not as necessary a means for the keeping of Vice from the further spreading its Contagion, and the retrieving of Virtue, as the preventing of those that have the Plague upon them from mixing with those that are not infected, and shutting of them up is necessary to the stopping the Raging of that Distemper; and, as it is not to be doubted, that where those that have the Plague visibly upon them, are allowed to converse promiscuously with the Sound, even to walk publickly in the Streets, it must be a certain sign that the Distemper is Epidemical, that there is little hopes of putting a stop to it, or that those whose proper Business it is to shut up and take care of the Diseased, are themselves infected with the Distemper; so it must in like manner be thought to be when there is no care taken of the moral Diseases of a State, when publick Prophaneness and Vice not only go unpunished by the Magistrate, but are triumphant. From hence therefore 'tis evident, that such worthy Magistrates as diligently discharge their Office are not only Instrumental in doing good to particular Persons, but to the Publick, and may be so of a General Reformation, and do therein what we have ground

ground to believe is highly acceptable to God ; for thus we read out of the Prophet, *Them that* 1 Sam. 2, *honour me I will honour ; and they that despise* 30. *me shall be lightly esteemed.* And accordingly we are told in the Holy Scriptures how acceptable to God the Zeal of Phinehas was, in Executing of Judgment upon Zimri and Cosbi ; Behold, Numb. 25, *I give unto him my Covenant of Peace, and he* 12, 13. *shall have it, and his Seed after him, even the Covenant of an Everlasting Priesthood, because he was Zealous for his God, &c.* And the Psalmist tells Psal. 106, us, *That it was accounted to him for Righteousness* 31. *unto all Generations for evermore.*

But now since His Majesty's late Proclamation, Unfaithful and the Address of the House of Commons to Magistrates His Majesty, do not only give us too great reason to fear, that all Magistrates will not duly consider this as they ought, but plainly tell our Magistrates, *That their Negligence and Unfaithfulness in their Office is the great Cause of the Debauchery and Prophaneness of the Kingdom :* It may not be indecent or improper in this Place to shew, in some Instances, how Magistrates may be liable to this Imputation.

And first, such Magistrates as can take such solemn Oaths, and accept of such Trusts, without any serious Intention to discharge them, who, tho' they are not vicious themselves, can observe, without any concern, the Breaches of God's Laws ; nay, in the course of many Years do not exercise their Authority, by any one single act, for the Punishing and Suppressing of the horrid Indignities that are daringly and almost in all Places offered to the Great God of Heaven and Earth, at the same time that they are very sensible of, and do highly resent any Affronts that

Such Magistrates as have no Concern to suppress the open Violations of Religion.

are

* Magistratus aut Judex neque pro justis orari, neque pro injustis exorari debet.

Qui induit personam judicis, exuit amici.

‡ Hæc tria lex secuta est, quæ princeps quoque sequi debet, aut ut eum quem punit, emendat, aut ut poena ejus cæteros meliores reddat, aut ut sublati malis securiores cæteri vivant.

Sen. de Clem. lib. 1. cap. 2.

Ut poena ad paucos metus ad omnes perveniat.

* Sicut est misericordia puniens, ita est crudelitas parcens.

Salutaris severitas vincit inanem speciem clementiæ.

are offered their Prince, and even their own Persons: * Or those that are so wonderfully gentle and flexible, so over-run with Pity, that they can discharge impious and debauched Wretches upon any common Pretences, their Cries or Complaints, or the scandalous Intercessions of their powerful Advocates, tho' frequently brought before them, and often with great difficulty, by faithful Officers, or zealous Informers. ‡ As the inflicting of Punishment on such Offenders is what Magistrates are strictly obliged to, and is moreover what a just Compassion to Criminals and the Community doth loudly call for: So, on the contrary, this Gentleness to them,

which I have described, is a great Injustice, and may, I think, be reckoned among those Mercies that *Solomon* tells us are cruel. * It

must at first naming appear to thinking Men a foolish and criminal Pity, a great Cruelty to the Offenders themselves, and the Community.

To the Offenders themselves, who, by being suffered to pass unpunished in their wicked

Courses, generally go on, frequently grow obstinate in them, and often bring on themselves,

with the Permission, or by the Judgment of God, far greater Sufferings in this World than

the legal Punishment of them would have amounted to; the Ruine of their Estates, Families, Health, a sudden or a scandalous Death by

publick

publick Justice, and without Repentance, Everlasting Destruction in the World to come; all which the timely and wholesome Punishment of them by the Magistrate might have been a means of preventing. * But this Gen-

tleness is a Cruelty and great Injustice to the Community;

for hereby publick Justice is obstructed, and triumph'd over, Magistracy is despised, the

† Government it self is disparaged and weakned, National Guilt, which calls for Natio-

nal Punishment, is contracted,

those that are either already actually vicious, or that have vicious Inclinations, are encouraged to continue, or to engage in ill Courses, which the Body of the People groan under the sad Effects of, by the continual Sufferings of one kind or other that are by this means brought upon them. And

thus other Mens Sins seem to be made, in some sense, the Sins of Magistrates, according to that known saying, * *That he that permits Offences to*

be committed, which he hath Power and Opportunity to prevent, doth in some sort command them to be

done; or in Scripture Phrase, Magistrates here- by seem to be Partakers in others Sins. Out of

a sense whereof, a former Prince of this Nation

is reported to have said, upon his hearing that

a Person whom he had pardoned for one Mur-

ther, against the expresse Word of God, had

committed another, *That he himself murthered*

the second Person, by Pardoning the Offender for

his first Offence. Such Magistrates then as these

are plainly Accessory to the Debauchery of the

Nation.

* *Clementiores lege iudices esse non oportet.*

† *Legum ac Magistratum contemptum sequuntur populi seditiosæ voces, & adversus Principes ipsos conjurationes ac defectiones. Bodin. Repub. lib. 3. cap. 1.*

* *Qui non*

prohibet

peccare

cum potest,

jubet.

Such Magistrates as discourage and obstruct others in the discharging of their Duty.

As in the next place, those must be thought to have been, if there have been any such, who have been so far from applying themselves, as their Oaths oblige them, to the Execution of the Laws against Prophaneness and Vice, that they have used their Skill and Diligence to discourage and hinder those of their own Body in doing their Duty, who have had the Honesty and Zeal to discharge it, by making it troublesome and difficult to them, by mustering up, upon Occasion, fallacious Arguments, even the common Excuses of Criminals against their Prosecution and Punishment. As for Instance, if they should have urged against the Punishing of Men for *Swearing* and *Cursing*, that 'tis too severe to make Men Examples for Words, which, tho' they should not be used, may fall from them unawares, without an ill Intention, and without Injury, no Man being supposed to be the worse for another Man's prophanely wishing him Damnation; and if Men are accustomed to such Language, or likewise to *Drunkenness* or *Lewdness*, 'tis difficult to break Habits, especially of such Vices to which we have Temptations from our corrupt Nature; and therefore to punish Gentlemen for these Offences seems to be ill Breeding, as well as Severity, and to tend moreover to the destroying of Conversation, and to the making of Life an insipid thing; and to execute the Laws against *Vice* and *Prophaneness* upon Men of an inferior Rank, is to disable them to pay Taxes, for the Support of the Government; the Restraining more-especially of some of them from frequenting of *Ale-Houses* and *Taverns* on the *Lord's-Day*, and others of them from the Permitting of *Tippling*

ling in those Houses, is the direct way to lessen His Majesty's Revenue arising by Excise, &c. If such Arguments as these should have been made use of by Magistrates in this or in the former Reigns, to obstruct the Suppression of these Enormities, it will be readily confessed by Men of any virtuous Principles, *That such Men plainly fall under the Charge of being a great Cause of the Debauchery of the Nation.* But having been led besides my Intention to name these fallacious and scandalous Arguments, and particularly the last and most specious of them that concerns the *Excise*, I ask leave of my Reader, lest we should have any such Men among us as should be so over-run with Concern for the Supplies of the Government, as to have little or no Concern for their Duty to their God, or Regard to his Providence overruling Kingdoms, and should not therefore be sensible of either the Impiety or Absurdity of these Arguments, to put such in mind, that if the poorer sort of Men are allowed to spend all, or a great part of their Money, in Taverns and Ale-Houses, they will not be in a very good Condition to maintain their Families, or to pay Taxes, which such Men are, upon this Occasion, I doubt, chiefly concerned about; or that if Men of a superior Rank have Money enough to maintain their Families, and discharge their other Obligations, and to spare, and they have no better Inclinations than to carry it to those Houses, they have time enough to spend it in them on the other six days of the Week, without doing it upon the *Lord's-Day*, to the Neglect of their Duty to their Families, and the manifest danger of the Ruine of their own Souls; or that, lastly, if a considerable Number of such Houses, many

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of which are Stews or Receptacles for High-way-Men, Coiners, and Pick-Pockets, were suppressed, as they ought to be by Law, we should therein act agreeably to the common Reason of Mankind, as well as to the Wisdom of our Ancestors, who, from a sense of the great Mischief that is done the Publick, by suffering an unnecessary Number of Publick Houses; the true and reasonable Design and Use whereof are, as is observed in the Preamble of one of our Statutes, *for the Entertainment of Travellers, and for the Convenience of Day-Labourers and poorer Persons*, and not for a Refuge for idle and vicious People, thought it necessary to discourage the Encrease, and to restrain the excessive Number of them by the Laws made for this purpose: If this, I say, was now done, there would be enough left as might be sufficient not only to answer the reasonable Uses of them, but to ruine, as 'tis not, I think, to be doubted they actually do, many more Families than are supported by them; and the Persons that keep such disorderly Houses, as they might be much more honestly employed, so more usefully to the Publick, in some other way of Living than in this Employment, which seems above most others destructive to it. From a Consideration whereof we may suppose it was, that our late Gracious Queen, in the Absence of the King, did signify by the Right Honourable the Lord Chancellour of England, to the Justices of Middlesex, whom his Lordship ordered to wait on him upon this Occasion, (as by their *printed Order* made in pursuance of it may appear) That it was Her Majesty's Pleasure that they should use their utmost Diligence to prevent the Frequenting of *Ale-Houses and Taverns* on the

Lord's-

I Jac. Reg. cap. 9.

Cook 8. 32.

II Hen. 7. cap. 2.

5 & 6 Ed. 6. cap. 25.

May 30. 1693.

Lord's-Day, as well out of time of Divine Service as
*in, by putting the * Laws made against Tipling * 1 Jac. c. 9.*
in those Houses in strict Execution, which they 21 Jac. c. 7.
are since put in Mind of by his Majesty's late 1 Car. c. 4.
Proclamation. But such Objections as these have 7 Jac. c. 10.
so little appearance of common Sense, and less 4 Jac. c. 5.
of a good meaning in them, that they do not
deserve a more particular Confutation ; and as
they serve as well for the not Punishing Perjury,
Bribery, &c. so they would be with much more
Decency offered, and one would hope sooner to
hear of them urged under a Heathen Govern-
ment, than in a Protestant Country, and espe-
cially under the Reign of a Prince that hath de-
clared, that he desires his Government should
be supported by the Virtues, and not by the Vices
of his People. If therefore such Arguments as
these should be used in this Reign, especially by
Magistrates, what an Indignity would thereby
be offered to the King and to the Nation? His
Majesty hath not surely gone through so many
Years Fatigues, and exposed Himself to so ma-
ny Personal Dangers by Sea and Land, and the
Nation hath not lost so much Blood, and spent so
many Millions for the securing of our Liberties,
and the obtaining a Peace with our Neighbours,
that bad Men may have the Liberty to Blaspheme
the God of Heaven, and by their crying Sins to
provoke Him to destroy us ; to fling Contempt
upon Religion, and insult over our Laws, and
to ruine us as well as themselves, under the
false and scandalous Pretences that we shall be
by their Impunity the better enabled to pay off
the Debt that is upon the Nation ; that His Ma-
jesty's Revenue will be encreased by the En-
crease of Drunkenness, Prophanation of the Lord's-
E 2 Day,

Day, &c. If we should have any Magistrates who should thus wildly argue, to hinder the Prosecution of such Offenders; and if this Frenzy should thereby prevail, what an infatuated Nation must we be thought to be?

Such Magistrates that frequently and openly break the Laws themselves.

But supposing that we are not in danger of Magistrates, especially in *this Reign*, that shall thus abuse their *Authority* to the vilest Purposes, by making it a Covert for acting the basest things, what shall we think, in the next place, of such Magistrates, if we should have any of them, who, when their Commission tells them that they *are to keep the Laws, as well as cause them to be kept*, should frequently and openly break them, by whose bad Examples Multitudes may be led into vicious Courses, or confirmed in them, and by it and their Unfaithfulness in their Office, (which I take to be generally a Consequence of the other) a Nation may be drawn into Ruine, instead of being reformed by them? May not such Magistrates be justly charged with being a great Cause of the Debauchery of the Nation? And what a load of Guilt must thereby lie upon them? Unhappy Men, that when they have so many Sins of their own, they will by this means contract so terrible an Addition to them. History may, I think, tell them of more than one Unfaithful Magistrate who have been flea'd, and whose Skins have serv'd to cover the Bench or Place where they sat: But what is this Punishment to that which an Unfaithful Magistrate hath reason to fear in the next World, tho' he meets with none in this? Supposing then from His Majesty's *Proclamation*, and the *Address* of the late House of Commons, that there may have

have been, within our Memory, some such Ma-*The Guilt*
 gistrates as these, does it not behove such Men *that seems*
 speedily to lay to Heart the dreadful Sin of *to lie upon*
 their having been Promoters of the Devil's King-*such Un-*
 dom, and of Publick Ruine? And I need not *faithful*
 surely tell them, that 'tis not enough for them to *Magistrates.*
 be sensible of their Guilt and Danger, to be sor-
 ry for the great Mischief they have done their
 Country, without heartily endeavouring, as they
 have opportunity, to retrieve it by their future
 Diligence, and contrary Behaviour. The Na-
 ture of distributive Justice, which their Office
 acquaints them with, requires a Man to re-
 pair the Injuries he has done to any. This is
 so stated a Rule among Divines, in the various
 kinds of known and wilful Injuries we may do
 to the Souls and Bodies, Estates, and Reputa-
 tion of our Neighbours, and is so generally ac-
 knowledged, that I shall not labour to prove it.
 If then 'tis allow'd, that all sorts of wilful In-
 juries that we do our Neighbours, without Re-
 pentance for them, expose us to the Justice of
 God; and that our Repentance is not in ordi-
 nary Cases reckoned sound and compleat un-
 less we endeavour, when it is in our Power, to
 repair the Injuries we have done: Can such
 Men be imagined so blindly partial to them-
 selves, as not to think, when they have publick-
 ly dishonoured God, have drawn, by their wick-
 ed Examples, Numbers of Men into Sin, or
 confirmed 'em in it, have made use of their Au-
 thority to patronize Vice, (and perhaps to dis-
 credit and oppose just Endeavours of Reforma-
 tion) in Contempt of their Oaths and Trusts;
 and have thereby done so much Injury to a
 Kingdom, that they are not obliged, for the re-

moving the load of Guilt that is upon them, the obtaining Forgiveness from God, a well-grounded Peace in their own Minds, and Esteem from Men, sincerely to endeavour to repair the Injuries they have done to their Religion, their Neighbours, or their Country, by their future Care and Diligence? And till they do give the World some Proof of this, they will not take it amiss if we do not think, that their late Representatives in Parliament have put them under too heavy a Charge; and if we say that this is so very great, that tho' we are sure that the Christian Religion is the best Religion in the World, yet it so much condemns such Practices, that such as are guilty of them are a Dishonour to their Profession, that we reckon that honest Heathens are not the worst sort of Men; or rather, that there are few, if any, worse than corrupt and unfaithful Magistrates. And therefore, methinks, tho' such Magistrates were deaf to all Counsel, were so given over to a Spirit of Slumber, that no Motives that have been offered them from Religion will make any such Impression upon them, as to awaken them to a sense of their Sin and Danger, if they have yet any thing of the Modesty of Men remaining; Shame might oblige them to a better Behaviour: that they should not be able to look a Man in the Face that hath a Love to God and his Country; but more especially, that they should be in the greatest Confusion to hear in our Churches, if they should come there, the King's *Proclamation* Four times in the Year, charging them with being the great Cause of the Encrease of Prophaneness and Vice in the Nation. It hath been generally thought an Indication of a good and generous Mind to
desire

desire an honest Reputation among Men; and, on the contrary, a sign of a base Soul wholly to despise it; on which Consideration Solon might well presume, in the Laws he gave the *Athenians*, *That he that hath no Value for his Reputation, will have little or no Regard to the Publick Interest*: For how can it be reasonably imagined, that he should have a tender sense of the Honour or Interest of his Country, who hath no sense of his own Honour and greatest Interest, but that he will sacrifice them upon Occasion? Indeed he that hath neither regard to Conscience, nor sense of Shame, seems not only in great Danger of not being reduced to Virtue by any common Methods, but to be lost to almost all good Purposes, to be unfit for common Intercourses with Men, * but much more unfit to be honoured and entrusted with the Care of the Execution and Maintenance of the Laws, wherein the Religion, † the *Honour and Prosperity of the Nation*, is so highly concerned: And therefore I submit it to the Judgment of those who are more especially concerned to consider of these important Matters, whether it is not highly to be wished, that effectual Care may be taken for the Preventing the fatal Consequences of such Mens obtaining, in any future Reign, Commissions of this kind, particularly by disabling any to hold them after they are convicted a certain number

* Periculosum est insipienti gladium, ac improbo viro Magistratum committere.

Τὸν γὰρ σωτῆρα ἢ οὐλακα τῶν νόμων ἀδιάφορον εἶναι δὲ εἰς δυνάμιν ἀνθρώπων.

‡ Inter omnia quæ Republicam ejusque felicitatem conservant, nihil utilius, nihil præstantius quam viros ad Magistratus gerendos eligere, summa prudentia, sapientia & virtute præditos; quique ad honores obtinendos non ambitione, non largitionibus, sed lege, virtute & modestia sibi parent aditum. *Grim. de Op. Sen. p. 109.*

of times of the Violations of the Laws which they are entrusted to execute. For if we enquire into the Reasons of the Happiness of most, if not all of those Nations, who have arrived at the greatest pitch of Glory and Prospe-

* Verè dici potest Magistratum legem esse loquentem, legem autem mutum esse Magistratum. Magistratibus igitur opus est, sine quorum prudentia & diligentia civitas non potest stare. Cic. *de Legibus*, p. 232.

rity, we shall, I believe, have a general Consent, That the Diligence and Faithfulness of Magistrates have been one of the greatest Causes of it, unquestionably far more instrumental therein than * good Laws, which, we know, are but dead Letters without the Magistrates Execution of them. † And therefore *Plato* in his common-Wealth appointed, that the Conservators of the Laws, whose chief Care was to promote Virtue, should be such Men as were eminent for Virtue, and ‡ more apply'd himself to the Forming of Magistrates than Laws. And accordingly *Cicero* might well observe, That if Magistrates keep the Laws themselves, they had little more to wish for. || And the Famous *Athenian* Law-giver, That Magistrates ought to obey the Laws, as well as the People the Magistrates, that a Government may be lasting. Indeed we cannot easily

† Πρῶτον μὲν τῶν ἱερῶν τῶν τε ἀρετῶν εἰληρότων, ἔπειτα τῶν νομοφυλάκων τοῖς αἰὲν πρεσβεύοντι δέκα. *Plato de Leg. Lib. 12. p. 959.*

Νομοφύλαξι δὲ πολλά τε ἀλλὰ ἀνάγκη πράττειν καὶ πολλῶν ὀπμιελῶναι· τέτων δ' ἐκ ἡκίστα, ὅπως αὖν παίδων τε καὶ ἀνδρῶν καὶ πάσης ἡλικίας ὀπμιελόμενοι ζῶσι. *Ibid. p. 959.*

‡ Cum leges omnes vel optimæ absque probatissimis Magistratibus mortuæ sint, Magistratus autem optimi vel absque legibus scriptis ipsi sunt divæ leges, merito *Plato* non in condendis Legibus, sed formandis Magistratibus omni diligentia elaboravit.

|| Σόλων, πῶς ἄριστα αἱ πόλεις οἰκοῦντο, ἐρωτηθεὶς, εἶπεν εἰν μὲν οἱ πολλοὶ τοῖς ἀρχαῖς πείθωνται, οἱ δὲ ἀρχαῖοι τοῖς νόμοις. *Stob.*

conceive

conceive how any Nation can be long happy without good Magistrates: So that 'tis with great reason that our Church directs us to pray, *Faithful & That all that are put in Authority may truly and zealous Magistrates a* indifferently minister Justice, to the Punishment of Wickedness and Vice, and to the Maintenance great Blessing of God's true Religion and Virtue; and that we sing to their esteem those that thus discharge their Duty as Country.

great Blessings to their Country, and may praise God for them; and, on the contrary, that we think that those unhappy Men, who, under the Obligations of Oaths and Trusts, have neglected or opposed the Execution of the Laws for the Punishment of Wickedness and Vice, and Maintenance of Religion, do deservedly lie under the dreadful Imputation of having been a great Cause of the Prophaneness and Debauchery of Country.

the Nation, and the fatal Enemies of it, * since we may look on that Nation, whether it be our own, or any other, to be in a very languishing Condition, and in manifest danger of Ruine, where the Magistrates and the generality of Men of greater Ranks, who have, by their being placed in higher Stations, as Stars in higher Orbs, so many Advantages to conduct the lower Ranks of Men, by the shining Examples of virtuous Lives, to support the Reputation and Interest of Virtue, do, by the Abuse of their Authority, or by their vicious Behaviour, scatter a pestilential Infection where they come, basely make use of the

Advantages

Unfaithful and vicious Magistrates fatal Enemies of their Religion and their

* Nam licet videre, si velis replicare memoriam temporum, qualescunque summi Civitatis fuerint, talem Civitatem fuisse. Idque haud paulò est verius quam quod Platoni nostro placet, qui Musicorum cantibus ait mutatis, mutari Civitatum status, ego autem Nobilium vita, victuque mutato, mores mutari Civitatum puto. Cic. de Leg. p. 336.

† Accidit Magistratum negligentia, & vitiis Nobilium, cives paulatim à virtute desciscant, variisque malis Rempublicam afficiunt, quibus inundatis Rempublicam fluctuare necesse est. *Grim. de Opt. Sen. l.2. 152.*

Advantages they have above others, to the Dishonour of God, by whose Permission they enjoy them; † instead of being Patrons of Religion, help to debauch those about them, and ruine their Country.

Of the Inferior Officers Oaths, and their Oaths. Inferior Officers are likewise obliged by their Oaths, as well as by the Design of their Offices, to be diligent in bringing Offenders to Punishment; and therefore they are highly criminal if they are negligent therein.

The Constable's Oath. The Constable's Oath tells him, *That he is to use his Endeavour that Night-Walkers be apprehended. To see that the Statutes made for Punishing Vagabonds, and such idle Persons, coming within his Bounds and Limits, be duly put in Execution. To have a watchful Eye to such Persons as shall maintain or keep any Common House or Place where any unlawful Game is or shall be used; as also, to such as shall frequent or use such Places, or shall use or exercise any unlawful Games there or elsewhere, contrary to the Statutes. To present at the Assizes, Sessions of the Peace, or Leet, all and every the Offences done contrary to the Statutes made to restrain the inordinate Haunting and Tippling in Inns, Ale-Houses and other Victualling-Houses, and for Repressing of Drunkenness; and that he is well and duly, according to his Knowledge, Power, and Ability, to do and execute all other things belonging to a Constable's Office.*

Whoever therefore they are that undertake this Office, and wink at Offenders, or do not endeavour to bring them to Punishment, would do well to consider, how they can be acquitted from

from Perjury ; but how much clearer is their Fault, if they neglect or refuse to serve those Warrants which are brought to them against Swearers, Drunkards, Lewd Persons, and Prophaners of the Lord's-Day ; or to levy the several Forfeitures for these Offences ? as too many Constables, Headboroughs, Overseers and Church-Wardens have done, which the Commission of a Justice of the Peace tells him he is to enquire after. Their Guilt is of the same nature with that of those Justices, who discourage Informations, and refuse to sign Warrants against such Offenders, whereby, besides all other Aggravations of their Sin before-mentioned, they hinder the Poor of that Relief which the Law gives them out of the Penalties upon those Statutes, * which in some Cases may happen to be the depriving them of their Lives, and ought to be a dreadful Consideration to those that have the Guilt of it upon them ; the Poor having as good and undoubted a Right to these Forfeitures, vested in them by Law, as any Man hath to his own Estate. I have said so much of the Constable's Duty, that there is the less need of my adding much of the Church-Warden's, Sidesman's, and other Inferior Officers Obligations in this respect, which fall in with that of the Constable's.

The Church-Wardens and Sidesmens Oath does not run in the same terms in all Diocesses, tho' their Office is, I suppose, much the same in most, if not all. The Tenor of the Church-Wardens and Sidesmens Oath in the Diocess of London, is as follows :

*The Church-
Wardens
Oath.*

You shall Swear truly and faithfully to execute the Office of a Church-Warden, within your Parish, and according to the best of your Skill and Knowledge present such Things and Persons as you know to be presentable by the Laws Ecclesiastical of the Realm.

And one of the Articles of Enquiry exhibited to the Ministers, Church-Wardens, and Sidesmen of every Parish, runs thus: *Are any of your Parish known or suspected to be guilty of Incest, Adultery, Fornication, or any other Enormous Crimes! Do any Prophane the Lord's-Day, or any other great Holy-day, or the Name of GOD? And if the Church-Wardens and Sidesmen neglect to Present, the Ministers are told, That they may, and ought to Present, as they have the highest Obligations to suppress Iniquity.*

*Of the Ne-
cessity of
Persons giv-
ing Infor-
mations to
Magistrates
of the
Breaches of
these Laws.*

From hence 'tis plain, That the Power of Inferior Officers, as well as that of Magistrates, is great, and would have a very remarkable Effect for the Suppressing of publick Disorders, if it was generally used, and might (with God's Blessing) go very far towards a National Reformation, with the Assistance of the Magistrate, if private Persons would but do as, I conceive, becomes them, in giving Informations against Swearers, Drunkards, Lewd Persons, and Prophanners of the Lord's-Day, to the Magistrate; which shall be my next Business to recommend to the Consideration of all that have a Love to God, their Neighbour, or their Country.

It hath been proved, That the Execution of good Laws is requisite in our present Circumstances for the Suppressing of Vice, and the Effecting a Reformation of Manners; but Ma-
gistrates

gistrates cannot put the Laws in Execution against Offenders without they have the Knowledge of the Offences; and they cannot be present at all Places to observe them, tho' they have either such a Sense of their Duty, or so pious a Concern to do all the good they can in their Office, as frequently to take their Walks, to observe Disorders, (as divers of the worthy Magistrates have here done) in the several Quarters of the County in which they live, and to embrace all Opportunities of using their Authority for the Suppressing them: And those Offences, that are *Deeds of Darknes*, it may be hoped, for the Honour of our Magistrates, are not now generally and knowingly committed before them. One would think that the Presence of a Magistrate should have such an Awe upon ill Men, that they should not dare to transgress before him: That he should resent it as a high Affront to him, if a Person of the highest Rank should discover so base an Opinion of him, as to expect that he should be content to break his Oath, to suffer him, upon the account of his Quality, to go unpunished for any Offence of this kind committed before him. It is certainly much so *Magistratus* where Magistrates have a just Sense of Honour, *indicat vi-* or are as Zealous and Faithful in the Discharge *rum.* of their Office as they ought to be: But the less this may reasonably be hoped from all Magistrates at this Day: there appears, I am sure, the more reason, or rather a necessity, for private Persons applying themselves to this Business of giving Informations to them of our reigning Sins, without which, it is not reasonably to be expected that Offenders will be generally brought to Punishment, especially in Cities and Corpora-

Corporations, where it may be presumed, without Uncharitableness, that many are daily either publickly or privately breaking the Laws against Prophaneness and Immorality.

*The giving
of Informa-
tions a Re-
ligious Of-
fice.*

Thus then our giving of Informations of these Offences to the Magistrate seems absolutely necessary in our present Circumstances, as we heartily desire or expect the Suppression of Prophaneness and Vice by Humane Laws. And I desire those who would be informed whether there is any Direction or Example for this Practice from the Word of God, to consider the following Texts of Scripture :

- Deut. 17. 2. among you within any of thy Gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee, Man or Woman that hath wrought Wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his Covenant, And he hath gone and served other Gods, and worshipped them, And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and behold it be true, and the thing certain, that such Abomination is wrought in Israel: Then shalt thou bring forth that Man, or that Woman, (which hath committed that Wicked thing) unto thy Gates, even that Man, or that Woman, and shalt stone them with Stones till they die. And the Israelitish Woman's Son Blasphemed the Name of the Lord, and Cursed, and they brought him unto Moses. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath Cursed without the Camp, and let all that heard him lay their Hands upon his Head, and let all the Congregation stone him. Now when these things were done, the Princes came to me, saying, The People of Israel, and the Priests and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the People of the Lands, doing according to their Abominations, &c.*
- And*

And if he neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church. Mat. 18. 17.
 Nay, they would do well to consider, in how many Instances, under the Jewish Dispensation, those who saw, or were acquainted with such Offences, were positively commanded to be Witnesses or Informers against the Persons who committed them, tho' they were their nearest Relations: Thus, If thy Brother, the Son of thy Mother, or thy Son, or thy Daughter, or the Wife of thy Bosom, or thy Friend which is as thine own Soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other Gods. Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him, neither shall thine Eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him. But thou shalt surely kill him; thine Hand shall be first upon him to put him to Death, and afterwards the Hand of all the People. And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such Wickedness as this is among you. Now tho' this Method of giving Informations to the Magistrate against prophane and vicious Persons may appear to unthinking People to carry Severity in it, I shall endeavour to shew that it may be look'd on as a comprehensive Branch of Charity, and a Religious Office, when it is performed, as other good Acts should be, with pure Intentions, upon proper Occasions, and in a Christian Temper.

It is in the first place, a great Kindness to the Poor; the Money that is raised by Convictions upon these Statutes against Prophaneness and Vice being by Law given to them, whereby they have in Fact had, for several Years past, in London and Westminster, a considerable Supply, in the times of their great Distress; and the Burthen of the Provision for them, that hath lain

Deut. 13. 6.

Ver. 8.

Ver. 9.

Ver. 11.

A Beneficial Office to the Poor.

so heavy on Parishes, hath been eased : So that this Office, if there was no other Reason for it, one would think should be agreeable to Men of Charity, to those especially whose Circumstances will not permit them to give such Assistance to the Poor as they could otherwise wish ; the Good of our poor Neighbour being hereby promoted by the same Act that prevents God's Dishonour.

A Charitable Office to the Persons inform'd against.

But the giving of Informations against Offenders will, I conceive, be found, upon an impartial Enquiry, to be a real Act of Charity, even towards the Persons offending, and to the Publick, as well as to those who are relieved by the Penalties levied upon them.

'Tis universally acknowledged, that we are not only to apply our selves to the working out our own Salvation, but that we are to be concern'd for the Salvation of one anothers Souls, and to endeavour to further it, according to our Advantages and Opportunities ; and that this Care is an Expression of great Charity to our Neighbour, and highly acceptable to Almighty

Jam. 5. 20. God. For we are told, *That he which converteth a Sinner from the Error of his way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a multitude of Sins ; and*

Dan. 12. 3. *that they that turn many to Righteousness shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever.* * Prayer, Exhortation, Admonition, Reproof, and good Example,

1 Tim. 2. 1. *are all proper means for this end, and are plainly inculcated in the Word of God ; but when*

Heb. 3. 13. *there is but little or no hope of our Neighbour's*

Ro. 15. 14. *Amendment by the use of such means, (as I conceive there often is) where the Offender is so*

2 Thess. 3. *impudent and hardned, that he despises Coun-*

15. *sel and Reproof, or they make no sort of good*

Eph. 5. 11. *Impression upon him, but he rather takes an Oc-*

Matt 5. 16. *casione*

casion to commit the more Sin, by falling into
 Passion, or other unchristian Irregularities, and
 he bids defiance to all other means, as he too
 often does, when he is so far from being ashamed
 of his Wickedness, that he values himself upon
 it, and makes a *Mock at Sin*, as *Solomon* tells us *Prov. 14. 9.*
Fools do, that he calls upon his Maker to damn
 him, or he otherwise glories in his Shame: And
 our Saviour's Direction takes place of *not casting* *Matt. 7. 6.*
of Pearls before Swine: And we have, lastly, little
 or no reason to expect any help or redress in this
 Case from the Ecclesiastical Power, by *telling his* *Mat. 18. 17.*
Offences to the Church: Is it not an Act of Cha-
 rity to try what the bringing the Offender to a
 legal Correction will do towards the recovering
 the poor Captive out of the Snare of the Devil,
 and bringing him to a right mind? And does
 not the neglect of doing this, the suffering him
 to go on in his wicked Courses, to the ma-
 nifest danger of the ruine of his Temporal and
 Eternal Interest, rather than the bringing him
 to wholesome Punishment, seem rather an Ar-
 gument of foolish Pity, than of Love; of a cruel
 and treacherous Fondness, than real Kindness?
 We do not think it an expression of Kindness to
 our dearest Relations, that are lying under dan-
 gerous Distempers, to chuse rather to see them
 quietly die, than to use Medicines that will give
 them more Pain and Disturbance, but are proper
 for the Recovering them. And it is not the less
 Kindness to them, because in their desperate and
 delirious Fits they have not a sense of the Good
 we intend them by it, but refuse the Remedy,
 and perhaps fly in the Face of the Physician;
 nay, when Incisions are necessary, when a Mem-
 ber is to be cut off to prevent a Gangreen, we tie
 F them

* Vexatio
dat intel-
lectum.

*A highly
serviceable
Office to the
Community.*

* Religio
contamina-
ta ad omni-
um pertinet
Injuriam.

them down, and their Cries and Reproaches of Hardship and ill Usage, tho' they are in their Senses, do not hinder the Operation. And have we not so much Compassion for those miserable Creatures who have little or no true Compassion for themselves, that lie under the Lethargy of Sin, whereby their Souls are in so great and evident danger of being for ever lost, to endeavour, by the Magistrates Punishment of them, to scarifie and awaken them out of their deadly Sleep, to a sense of their dangerous Condition? and the Consideration of it, which may have its beginning in the Fear of the Law, that they are driven to by the Shame and Punishment that is thereby brought upon them, * may be a means (with God's Grace) of working the happiest Effects, may end in their heartily embracing wholesome Counsels. And will not they then think, that they that brought them to legal Correction did them a Kindness, how grievous soever it was to them when it was upon them; and that it was happy for them that they met with that Punishment that led them to Wisdom? and when this Method for the good of our Neighbour's Soul fails, we may, as after the use of other proper means for the Cure of his Body, tho' without Effect, reasonably give our selves some Satisfaction upon this Consideration alone: But, in the next place, this Practice is however a high Service to the Community, for Religion being every Man's great Interest, every one's Work or Duty, * the Community, according to the Sense of the Civil Law, is injured by the Contempt that is flung upon it, by the open Affronts and Violations of it, which every Man, as in a common cause, is therefore concerned to prevent. Now the Exemplary

plary Punishment of open Offenders is the proper way (as Reason and Experience may convince us) to repress publick Vice and Prophaneness, to keep the Generality from it, and to prevent God's Dishonour. It is, I conceive, one way moreover to keep us from being *Partakers in other Mens Sins*, and to take away National Guilt; for a Nation may then be supposed to contract publick Guilt, when Wickedness is publick and insolent, when the Supream or Subordinate Magistrates and Ministers do, by their own ill Examples, and by their not Exercising their Power or Authority countenance and confirm Men in it, and the Body of the People have no concern for the Suppressing of it: But a Nation is not thought to draw upon it that publick Guilt which calls for National Punishment by the private Sins of particular Persons, which could not be prevented by either the Magistrates, Ministers, or the Peoples Care and Endeavours; much of which seems to be intimated to us, as from other Texts of Scripture, so particularly from these following: *The Hands of the Witnesses shall be first* Deut. 17.7. *upon him to put him to Death, and afterward the Hands of all the People. So thou shalt put the Evil away from among you. And all the People* Ver. 13. *shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously. Then shall his Father and his Mother lay hold on* Deut. 21. *him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his City,* 19. *and unto the Gate of his Place. And they shall say* Ver. 20. *unto the Elders of his City, This our Son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our Voice; he is a Glutton and a Drunkard. And all the Men of his City* Ver. 21. *shall stone him with stones that he die: So shalt thou put Evil away from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear. Where we may observe,*

that for the Suppressing of Sin, and the Preventing of publick Guilt, even Parents were commanded to bring their own Children to be punished with Death, if after they were corrected by them for Gluttony and Drunkenness, &c. they were not amended by it.

If then the Punishment of Offenders, by the Execution of the Laws against Debauchery and Prophaneness, is necessary to the Suppressing of Vice, and those Laws will not be generally executed, unless Persons acquaint Magistrates with the Breaches of them; if those that do so exercise Charity to the Souls of the Offenders, take a proper course thereby to avoid a Participation in their Guilt, to make a Provision for the Wants of the Poor, to promote a General Reformation of Manners, to remove National Guilt, and prevent God's Judgments, falling upon the Body of a People, can any wise and good Men, that duly consider these things, conclude, that they that zealously, and upon proper Occasions, give Informations to the Magistrates of the crying Enormities of this Kingdom, do that which is not agreeable to their Profession, as becomes Christians, or as good Members of the Community? nay, that considering our present Circumstances, that there is so little probability that a general Reformation of Manners will be carried on without it, whether they are not almost, if not altogether as necessary for this purpose as our Statute-Book, I was like to have said, as even our Magistracy? And then, lastly, can any wise and unprejudiced Men think, that such serviceable Persons as these, that often expose themselves to Inconveniencies in discharging this Office for Conscience-sake, (which may be perhaps

Those that give Informations for Conscience sake deserve Respect and Applause.

kaps the most difficult and invidious, and there-
fore a highly honourable part in this arduous
Work of Reformation) do not deserve great
respect, and good Words at least from those, who,
tho' they have just thoughts of the Reasonable-
ness, and Necessity of it, have not Zeal enough
themselves to discharge it? * and the good Words
that are given them, and the Respect that is paid
them upon this account may, in many cases, be
a means of furthering this Work, which are such
cheap and safe things, that, 'tis to be hoped, they
will not be thought too much to be afforded by
the most faint-hearted Christian that is willing
to contribute any Endeavours towards it; which,
it may be expected, those that deserve the Name
of Christians will be. For tho' those brave Men
are thus willing to expose themselves, often to

*Honestum
ex æquo
omnium ve-
neratione &
laudatione
dignum vi-
detur.

Primum
inter bene-
ficia est ut
boni laude
afficiantur.

Laus enim
pari emula-
tionem, e-
mulatio vir-
tutem. Stob.

p. 50.

Reproach and Hardships from bad Men, for such
noble purposes, it will, I think, notwithstand-
ing, considering the Infirmities of Humane Na-
ture, and the Wickedness of this Nation, be our
Prudence and Religion to endeavour, by all
proper Methods, to prevent their being put too
much upon the tryal of Sufferings from proflig-
ate Men, which, 'tis self-evident, our particular
countenancing of them, and speaking well of their
Actions upon all due Occasions will effectually
do. Our Laws suppose such Men thus highly
useful, as clear reason tells us they are, for the
Promotion of Virtue, and indeed for the Pre-
servation of any Government. Her late Ma-
jesty of Glorious Memory, in pursuance of Her
great design of Reforming the Nation, did there-
fore, in Her Gracious Letter* to the Justices of
Middlesex, Command them to be careful and di-
ligent in Encouraging all Persons that should bring

Magistrates
obliged by
their Oaths,
and strictly
commanded
by Authori-
ty, to give
such Persons
Encourage-
ment.

* July 9.

them 1691.

The Magistrates of many Cities and Corporations have invited Persons to give Informations, and promised to give them Encouragement.

Gloucester July 8. 1691 *Justice of Middlesex, the Magistrates of London, and of divers other Cities of the Kingdom, from a sense of the great Service that is done the Publick by such Persons giving Informations, or rather, as may be supposed, from the absolute Necessity of it, do in their Printed Orders invite those that are Well-wishers to their Country, to bring them Informations of the Breaches of the Laws against Prophaneness and Vice; and tell them 'tis their Duty to do it, and promise to give them Encouragement.*

London July 9. 1691 *And now, lastly, His Majesty by His Proclamation does command all Judges, Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and all other Officers and Ministers, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, and all His Subjects, whom it may concern, to be very Vigilant and Strict in the Discovery, and the Effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all*

Oct. 5. 1691 *Persons who shall be guilty of Excessive Drinking, Blasphemy, Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Lewdness, Prophanation of the Lord's-Day, &c. as they will answer it to Almighty God, and upon pain of his highest Displeasure.*

Buckingham Jan. 1691 *So that those who oppose the giving of Informations in these Cases, not only seem directly to strike at the Foundation of our Constitution, but do oppose Reformation, and confront the Government, which are Enormities that demand a due Resentment from all that are concerned for the Honour of our Government, our Laws, or our Religion.*

Bodmin Jan. 1691 *And if any Magistrates should discourage those that bring them Informations on these occasions, by giving them hard Words, making their Work as difficult to them as they can, by wilfully forcing them to long and unnecessary Attendance on them in this Business, or not sheltering them from the*

London Midd. 1692 *Insults*

London Lond. 1693

Midd. 1693

London Lond. 1697

Midd. 1697

London Lond. 1698

Gloucester Octob. 1698

Midd. 1698

London Lond. 1699

London Lond. 1700

Salop. 1700

Surry 1700.

&c.

Insults of obstinate Offenders, if any should be so insolent and daring as to offer them, 'tis, I think, evident, that they not only act therein contrary to their Duty, as Christians, but to their Oaths and Trusts, as Magistrates, and to their pretensions of Loyalty and Obedience to the Government, as Subjects. And now, is it possible to conceive, that any Magistrates can desire the Execution of those Laws; nay, that any that are not the greatest Enemies to it, and are not lost to all sense of true Honour as well as Conscience, should in defiance of all their Obligations, and in full Contradiction to their printed Orders with their Names to them, publickly set up by their Direction on Churches and other publick Places, not treat with respect, and give the greatest Encouragement to those excellent Persons, particularly by making this business as easie to them as they can, by Protecting them from any kind of Affronts and Assaults from wicked Men, and giving them all possible dispatch, who, in such a profligate Age, do, for the preventing the Indignities that are offered to the great God, and the Ruine of their Country, bring them, generally with trouble, and sometimes with great difficulty, Informations of such Offences?

And, on the other hand, I do not see, generally speaking, how those that are convinced, that the giving of Informations to Magistrates of these Offences is a Christian Office, a likely and proper, if not a necessary means of *Reformation of Manners*, and yet wholly neglect the doing it, at a time when they see their-Fellow-Christians engaging successfully in it, can in ordinary cases easily satisfy themselves that they have a due

Zeal for God's Honour, or Charity to their Neighbors. 'Tis allowed, that this will be sometimes done with some Danger and Inconvenience, * but so much the more laudable is the doing of it. || A brave Man who refuses to live under the slavish Dominion of Custom and Example, who frequently works against Wind and Tide, and steers in the Teeth of Danger, must expect to be sometimes tost and batter'd; † but Dangers and Difficulties do sometimes invite, rather than discourage such a one from doing that which becomes him. Virtue could, I think, be hardly distinguished from a kind of Sensuality, if it were gained without any Labour. Every mean Soul can do such things as require no Resolution or Courage, that are not attended with any Trouble or Inconvenience; but tho there has never been so general a Corruption in any Christian Age or Nation, as that there have not been some conspicuous for their Piety, yet the number of those wise and happy Persons have, in most Ages of the World, been too few, who have preferr'd their Duty to all other Considerations. If 'tis not generally thought fashionable to Inform, let it be consider'd, whether 'tis fashionable to be Religious. Don't Men usually meet with the reproachful Names of Hypocrites, Fools, Enthusiasts, Phanaticks, or formal and precise Persons, who lead Christian, or but modest and regular Lives? But those Men that understand what Religion is, do not surely think this gives them a sufficient Dispensation to be Libertines. They know that *Elisba* and *St. Paul* were called Mad-men; that Holy *David* was derided by the People; that *Christ*, his *Apostles*, and the Christians in the first Ages, were treated accordingly.

* Dulce est
periculum
sequi Deum.
|| Serpens,
fitis, ardor,
arenæ, dul-
cia virtuti.

† Avida est
periculi vir-
tus, & quo
tendat non
quod passu-
ra est, cogi-
tat; quoni-
am & quod
passura est,
gloriæ pars
est. *Sen. de
Pr. cap. 4.
p. 137.*

Non est e-
nim quod
ullum æsti-
mes esse
sine virtute
laborem.

*Sen. de Vita
Beat. p. 669.*

Good Men
often meet
with re-
proachful
Names in
the Dis-
charge of
their Duty.

ingly. Wise Men and Christians are not so ^{† Nihil o-} much afraid of ill Names, as of wicked Actions; ^{pinionis}
[†] And our Judgment of Actions must not be ^{gratia om-} taken from the Opinions of Men, but from the ^{nia consci-} Nature of them, otherwise the Notions of Good ^{entia faci-} and Evil will be soon confounded. Those Actions ^{am.} are dishonourable that carry in their Nature a ^{Tuo tibi} Repugnancy to Reason and Religion; but if ^{judicio u-} those Actions that directly tend to preserve and ^{tendum est} strengthen Government, to promote Religion, ^{virtutis &} and the good of Mankind, be honourable, then ^{vitiorum,} the giving of Informations upon these Occasions, ^{grave ipsius} that are so much countenanced and encouraged ^{conscientiæ} by the Government and the Laws, are, I conceive, ^{pondus est,} truly honourable, tho corrupt Men judge other- ^{quâ sublata} wise; * such, for instance, who think it more ho- ^{jacent om-} nourable to resent an Affront with the loss of their ^{nia.} own or their Fellow-Christians Lives, and reckon, ^{* Apud} in short, Temperance and Chastity, Meekness ^{quos virtus} and Humility, Zeal for God, and Heavenly- ^{insania &} mindedness, contemptible Qualities, and fit for ^{furor esse} mean and base Souls. Let it be remembered, ^{dicitur.} that Christians are *|| to walk by Faith, and not || 2Cor.5.7.* *by Sight*; [†] by Precepts, and not by Examples; ^{† Non Ex-} that tis to the most high God, *who judgeth Right-* ^{emplis, sed} *teously*, and with whom the ** Wisdom of this World* ^{Legibus ju-} *is Foolishness*, and not to a sinful Generation that, ^{dicandum.} in divers Instances that might be mentioned, calls ^{* 1 Cor.} *Evil, Good*; and *Good, Evil*, that we are to ap- ^{3. 19.} prove our selves. So that putting this Case at that Disadvantage as the cowardly and formal Christian (who will not fail to raise Objections, and start Difficulties on such an Occasion) would have it, and will be sure himself to do; supposing that the giving of Informations of these Offences should sometimes expose Men to reproachful

ful Words or rude Treatment from an ill Magistrate, or a profligate Offender, which it will not be for the Honour of any Government to countenance, 'tis the Business, I think, of Christians to consider, whether they ought not to suffer Shame, and undergoe some Trouble and Loss for the Exercising an Act of Charity to their Neighbours Souls, for the Suppressing of National Sins, the Preventing of God's Dishonour, and the Ruine of their Country, now especially that their Endeavours of this kind will be so very likely to be effectual for these ends. If the Work is unquestionable good, we are told in

Gal. 4. 18. the Holy Scriptures, *That 'tis good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.* That Christ gave

Tit. 2. 14. *himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works.* And we are further told by our Blessed Saviour, That because his Disciples were not of the World, but he had chosen

John 15. 18, 19. *them out of the World, therefore the World hated them, as it hated him.* And by the Apostle, That

2 Tim. 3. 12. *all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer Persecution.* which, I think, Christians in this Age experience in some degree, as well as they did in the times of Persecution. For do we not see the faithful Servants of God frequently suffering Injuries from wicked Men? we see them calumniated, derided and contemned by them, and exposed to many Assaults and Sufferings from them for the sake of their Religion. Their holy Lives they are sensible do reproach them, which is very grievous to them; and for this cause they often I suppose, bear a Hatred to them, which puts them upon seeking Opportunities, which they soon enough find, to injure them, either

in

in their Goods, in their Bodies, or in their Reputation; of which there is given us, in the Book of *Wisdom*, a very lively Description: *Let us* *Wisd. 2. 12.*
lie in wait for the Righteous, because he is not for our turn, and he is clean contrary to our doings: he upbraideth us with our offending the Law. He *Ver. 14.*
was made to reprove our Thoughts. He is grievous *Ver. 15.*
unto us even to behold; for his Life is not like other Mens, his Ways are of another Fashion. We are *Ver. 16.*
esteemed of him as Counterfeits: He abstaineth from our Ways as from Filthiness: he pronounceth the End of the Just to be blessed, and maketh his boast that God is his Father. Let us see if his *Ver. 17.*
Words be true, and let us prove what shall happen in the End of him. Let us examine him with De- *Ver. 19.*
spitefulness and Torture, that we may know his Meekness, and prove his Patience. Let us con- *Ver. 20.*
demn him with a shameful Death: for by his own saying he shall be respected. But in the fifth Chapter there is a Representation of the different State of the Righteous and the Ungodly, among whom those that are either for or against Reformation will find themselves one day ranked, either to their unspeakable Comfort or Misery, that may be so much more encouraging to good Men, than the other Account may to any appear uncomfortable, that I shall give the Reader at the same time some View likewise of it. Then shall the Righteous *Wisd. 5. 1.*
Man stand in great boldness before the Face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his Labours, When they see it they shall be troubled *Ver. 2.*
with terrible Fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his Salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for. And they repenting, and groaning *Ver. 3.*
for anguish of Spirit, shall say within themselves, This was he whom we had sometimes in Derision,
and

- Ver. 4. *and a Proverb of Reproach. We Fools accounted his Life Madneſs, and his End to be without Honour.*
- Ver. 5. *How is he numbred among the Children of God, and his Lot is among the Saints?*
- Ver. 7. *We wearied our ſelves in the way of Wickedneſs and Deſtruction: yea, we have gone through Deſerts, where there lay no way: but as for the Way of the Lord we have not known it. What hath Pride profited us? Or what good hath Riches with our Vaunting brought us? All thoſe things are paſſed away like a Shadow, and as a Poſt that haſted by. For the Hope of the Ungodly is like Duſt that is blown away with the Wind: But the Righteous live for evermore, their Reward alſo is with the Lord, and the Care of them is with the moſt High. Therefore ſhall they receive a Glorious Kingdom, &c.*
- Ver. 8.
- Ver. 9.
- Ver. 14.
- Ver. 15.

If then wicked Men have ſuch an Enmity to the Righteous, and do by various ways often injure and oppreſs them, it is no wonder that the giving of Informations ſhould as well as other Chriſtian Offices or Duties ſometimes do, make Men liable to Oppoſition and Sufferings from bad Men, who deſire to indulge themſelves quietly in their Vices, becauſe this is a down-right diſturb- ing and confronting them in their vicious Practices: But 'tis, as hath been ſaid, our Buſineſs to conſider, that the Chriſtian Life is a Warfare, that Chriſtians are ſent into the World, as Soldiers into the Field, to fight againſt it, the Fleſh, and the Devil; and that as a Captain is tryed in a Battle, an expert Seaman in a Storm, ſo is a Chriſtian by the Temptations of all kinds that he meets with in his Warfare, by which he is diſciplined or catechized for a happy Eternity; and that therefore he muſt march on through all Difficulties and Diſcouragements, particularly

larly * through Honour and Dishonour, through * Per infamiam & bonam famam
good and bad Report, to Immortality ; and therefore, whether the Danger of our being exposed to Reproach and Contempt from wicked Men is a sufficient Reason for our having no regard to this Christian Office I am recommending? *graffari ad Immortalitatem.*

The Heathen Emperour, || *Marcus Antoninus*, || *Mar. Aur. Anto. l. 11.* could it seems tell us, *That in the pursuit of Virtue we must expect Reproaches and Contumelies,*

but that we are not to be deterred from it by the common Opinions of Men, which, says he, Socrates reckoned as the common Bugbears of the World, or the Terrour of Children. And Seneca in like manner, That Men will sometimes (which he judged the last Act of Desperation) reproach, hate, and persecute even Vir-

tue it self ; † and that he seemed to have the greatest Value for, or devotedness to Virtue, that loseth the Reputation of being Virtuous, to avoid the being otherwise. In truth, I think, 'tis

† *Nemo mihi videtur pluris aestimare virtutem, nemo illi magis esse devotus, quam qui boni viri famam perdidit, ne conscientiam perderet. Sen. Epist. 81.*

much to be feared, but being very unwilling to fall under the too common Errour of not duly considering Humane Frailties and Prejudices, or to advance positively any Opinion that may justly bear a dispute with any but those that bring the Reason of Mankind and Religion its self into dispute, (as I hope will appear throughout these Sheets)

* I submit it to the Judgment of the Casuists, that tho' the former general Negligence of

* *See the Arch-Bishop of Canterbury's late Circular Letter, with the concurring Letters of all the Bishops of that Province,*

for the Obligation of Persons to give Informations of the Breaches of the Laws against Prophaneness and Vice, p. 6.

good Men in this Matter may, and indeed, I think, must in Charity be supposed to have been very much owing to a Discouragement from Magistrates, to private Persons Ignorance of the Methods of performing this Office, or single Persons despairing of doing thereby much Service for the Ends beforementioned, under the dismal State this Nation in the two last Reigns was in; If this Negligence is continu'd after this Matter is plainly laid before us, the giving of Informations is now more generally insisted on by our Clergy in their Sermons, especially at those stated times that they are required to read the *Act of Parliament* against *Swearing and Cursing*, with the other *Statutes* against *Prophaneness* and *Vice*, by His Majesty's *Letter*, and His late Gracious *Proclamation* for the enforcing the Execution of them; and we have moreover such a change of Circumstances, and such favourable Occurrences, as that our Diligence in giving Informations will at this time so effectually promote a *National Reformation*, (as 'tis evident it will do from what is already done by it) that it will be found, notwithstanding the Objections and plausible pretences that will be made on this Occasion by many for their being excused from it, to proceed frequently, if not generally, from worse Causes, that we are either afraid or ashamed of discharging it, from a want of Faith, or of Love to God and our Neighbour, not duly considering the Admo-

Isai. 51. 7. nition, *Fear ye not the Reproach of Men, neither be ye afraid of their Revilings.* That the Fear-

Rev. 21. 8. ful and Unbelieving are joined together with those who shall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone; nor the Extent of our Saviour's Threatning, *Whosoever there-*
fore

fore shall be ashamed of me, and of my Words, in Mark 8.38.
 this adulterous and sinful Generation, of him also
 shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh
 in the Glory of his Father, with the Holy Angels;
 nor, lastly, the great Encouragement given in
 the Word of God to those that suffer for dis-
 charging of their Duty, Blessed are they which Matt. 5.10.
 are Persecuted for Righteousness sake: for theirs
 is the Kingdom of Heaven. Our light Affliction, 2Cor.4.17.
 which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far
 more Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory. If
 any Man suffer as a Christian, let him not be 1Pet.4.16.
 ashamed; but let him glorifie God on this behalf.
 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the 1Pet.4.19.
 Will of God commit the keeping of their Souls to
 him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

And now, if notwithstanding what hath been
 said, or that may be urged by our Clergy with
 more Advantage in their Discourses, for our gi-
 ving Informations against prophane and vicious
 Men, and the Magistrates Diligence and Faith-
 fulness that was before insisted on, this criminal
 Fear and Shame shall so generally prevail, as to
 keep private Persons from giving Informations
 in these Cases, and shall likewise keep Magistrates
 (who have less colour of Excuse for their Un-
 faithfulness, they being under the Obligations of
 Oaths and Trusts, super-added to those they
 have as Christians) from using their Diligence
 in the Execution of the Laws, and particularly
 from giving all Countenance and just Encou-
 ragement to those who bring them Informations,
 at the same time that Prophaneness and Debau-
 chery do appear so shameless and fearless among
 us, what a weight of Guilt may be supposed to
 lie upon this Nation? And in how great danger
 of

of Misery and Destruction may it be apprehended to be, which I do not see with what reason we can expect will so likely be prevented by any other means, as by the close Conjunction, the zealous and united Endeavours of good Men, for the Retrieving of Religion, and the Morals of the Nation, by all Christian and Prudent Methods. For Religion in general, and the Practise of every moral Virtue in particular, do in their own Nature tend not only to the Felicity of every Man's private Life, but do also conduce to the Peace, Order and Welfare of all publick Societies, and good Government over Men, as it hath the greatest Influence for these Ends upon *Magistrates* and *Subjects*.

The Influence that Religion hath on Nations.

* Non sic
infectere
sensus hu-
manos edi-
cta valent,
ut vita re-
gentis.
Qui Mace-
doniæ re-
gem erudit
omnes eti-
am subditos
erudit.
Delirant re-
ges, plectun-
tur Achivi.

Religion teaches and obliges Governours to over-rule their Subjects in the Fear of God, to his Glory, and for the Safety and Prosperity of those that are in Subjection to them; and therefore, I think, to endeavour to support and encourage them in the Exercise of Religion and Virtue, and this as well by the use of their Authority, (which may, for instance, be expressed by their Personally Countenancing and Promoting Men of Virtue, and Discountenancing vicious Men, by their taking Care that good Laws be made for the Security of Religion; and that the Laws that are made for the Promotion of Christian Virtues, and the Suppression of Vice, be put in Execution) as by their Exemplary Behaviour, * which hath a wonderful force, is as it were a living Law, and Religion instills in Subjects such Principles and Dispositions as in their own nature tend to make a Government strong and prosperous, as well as themselves happy: It instructs and obliges them to obey Magistrates,

not

not only for Fear but out of Conscience. † And † Facile est as Piety and Virtue do thus evidently conduce imperium to the Stability and Happiness of any Kingdom in bonos. and Government; so Vice and Irreligion, in the natural consequences of them, tend to bring Decay and Ruine upon them, as they unqualifie Magistrates for Government, and * make Subjects unfit for Commands, averse to all good Order, and destructive instead of helpful Members of a Community; from whence † Plutarch might justly esteem it the Foundation or Cement of Humane Society, and with Plato conclude, That in the Institution of Magistracy the first and chief Care should be of Religion; and Plutarchus the Famous Scipio observe, that it was impossible adversus any City should stand if their Manners were Colot. p. thoroughly depraved, tho' their Walls were ne- 1124. ver so firm. || Accordingly, I conceive, there have been but few, if any, amongst the ancient

* Homo sine Religione, sicut equus sine freno.

† Συνεκτικὸν ἀπάσης κοινωνίας καὶ νομοθεσίας ἔργημα.

|| Ἀρχὴ δὲ ἔστι τῆς μετὰ ταῦτα ἡμῖν

νόμων ἥδε τις ἀφ' ἱερῶν ἡγμένη. Plato de Legibus lib. 6. p. 771.

Τὸ δὲ φυλακτήριον ἐνταῦθα πρὸ οἰκοδομητέον τοῖς φύλαξιν ἐν μεσσηῇ. Plato de Repub. lib. 4. p. 424.

Haud scio an pietate sublata fides etiam & societas humani generis, & justitia tollitur. Cic. de Nat. D. lib. 1. p. 196.

Οὐκ ἄρα τειχῶν, οὐδὲ τεμένων, οὐδὲ νεωρέων δεόνται αἱ πόλεις, ὡς Ἀλκιβιάδης, εἰ μέλυσιν θυδαμονήσῃν, οὐδὲ πλήθοις, οὐδὲ μεγέθοις ἀντὶ ἀρετῆς.

Non itaque mœnibus, neque triremibus, neque navalibus indigent civitates, Alcibiades, ad hoc, ut felices sint, neque verò aut hominum multitudine, potentiæve magnitudine, ἀλλὰ virtute. Pl. Alc. p. 134.

Ἀλλὰ πόλις ἂν μοι δοκεῖ μάλλον ἰδαροῖς χερσὶν, ἢ πολιτεία τῆς πόλεως δοξῆς ἀναρεθείσης παντάπασιν, σύστασιν λάβειν ἢ λαβῆσαι τηρῆσαι. Plut. p. 1125.

Pieras inesse non potest, cum qua simul & sanctitatem & religionem tolli necesse est: quibus sublatis perturbatio vitæ sequitur, & magna confusio. Cic. de Nat. De. p. 196.

Οὐκ ἔν ὡσαύτως ἐν πόλει τε, καὶ ἀπάσαις ἀρχαῖς, καὶ θεσφαῖς ἀποφραγμέναις ἀρετῆς ἔπαιον τὸ κακῶς περὶ τῆς πόλεως. Plato Alcib. 135.

and celebrated Legislators and Statesmen, whatever there have been among our Modern, who have not had the greatest Regard to Religion in the Modelling and Governing of Civil Societies; for how is it possible to conceive that any State should long stand and be prosperous without Honesty or Peace? Or that it should either enjoy a lasting Peace, or have a general Honesty, without Religion? And therefore it was no weak, tho' a wicked piece of Policy, which they tell us of a King of *Assyria*, who chose rather to endeavour to overcome the City of *Babylon*, by sending in of Players, Lewd Women, &c. to debauch it, (by which means he effectually did it, and at last obtained his End) than to invade it with a powerful Army. Upon the whole Matter, We may dare to challenge all the Politicians in the World to form a sound Scheme of Government, without supposing and securing Religion for the Basis of it. And as we never heard of a Government that publickly declared for Immorality; so if we could ever suppose there should be any such; nay, that there were such a one, where a con-

* Religio neglecta maximam pestem in Civitatem infert, omnium scelerum fenestram aperit.

τὴν δὲ Ἀδαιμονίαν χεὶρ ἀρετῆς ἀδύνατον ὑπάγειν. Arist. de Rep. lib. 7. p. 582.

Τέτοις ἂν εἰς ἡ ἰσχυρώατε σκοπετέον ὥν μὲν τοίνυν ἀνὴρ πόλις ἔσονται. Arist. de Rep. lib. 7. p. 583.

siderable number of such Monsters should obtain and keep the Ascendency in any Government, we might conclude what its Fate would sooner or later be. * For when Religion is despis'd, and Virtue is lost in a Nation, which, as hath been prov'd, would in time be the consequence of a publick Contempt of it, how easie a Prey will it prove to its Neighbours? Or how unavoidably will it fall into Divisions, Confusion and Ruine of it self? Of

Of such consequence therefore Religion and Virtue seem plainly to be to a Nation, abstracting from the Consideration of a Just God that rules in the Kingdoms of the Earth, that rewards Righteous Nations with Prosperity, and executes Justice upon those that are Wicked, which we must believe if we have any due regard to Sacred or Prophane History, to the Experience and Suffrage of all Ages of the World. For thus it is said in the Holy Scriptures, to this purpose; *The Nation and Kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish: yea, those Nations shall be utterly wasted. A fruitful Land he turneth into Barrenness for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein.* And by the Account that is given us in the Word of God of the Divine Justice, of God's charging Guilt upon Nations, as well as upon particular Persons; and of his Proceeding with the Old World, the Jewish Nation, &c. have we not great Reason to think, that in the ordinary Course of God's Providence, a Nation that is eminently Righteous should have his Blessing in an eminent Manner; and that a Nation that is remarkably Wicked will feel, sooner or latter, the Effects of his Displeasure? We are acquainted, that before God destroyed the Old World, *He saw that the Wickedness of Man was great in the Earth: That all Flesh had corrupted his Way upon Earth:* And their Sin is given as the Reason of their Destruction. *And God said unto Noah, The End of all Flesh is come before me, for the Earth is filled with Violence through them: and behold, I will destroy them with the Earth.* Accordingly we may observe, that the Providences of God towards the Jewish Nation were very eminently suited to their Behaviour: That tho' the Jews were the peculiar

Isai. 60. 12.

Psal. 107.

33, 34.

Deut. 21.

1, 8, 9.

Gen. 6. 5.

Ver. 12.

Ver. 13.

People of God, and highly blessed, they were frequently punished by God, and at last destroyed
 2 Chro. 36. for their Sins. That all the chief of their *Priests* and their *People* did wickedly, and after all the Abominations of the Heathen, before they were led into Captivity, and Crucified the *Lord of*
 Mat. 27. 25. *Life, whose Blood they called for upon themselves and their Children*, before they were finally destroyed : And as their Destruction, which our *Saviour*
 Matt. 24. foretold, is, I think, agreed on all hands to have
 Mark 13. been one of the most dreadful Instances of *Misery* that have been known to have befallen any

Nation either before or since that time. * So *Josephus*, tho' a Jew, a celebrated Historian, thus says, *That as he thought no Nation ever suffered such things ; so no Nation, from the beginning of the World, did ever so abound in all manner of Impiety ;* to which Christians in this Age may, I think, justly add, That by their continuing for so many Hundred Years to be a despised and vagabond People, and scattered throughout the World, without City or Country, without Temple or Altar, that we know of, no Nation seems ever to have been so terrible and lasting a Monument of God's Displeasure for National Sins, as that which this People was guilty of seems to be so much greater, and to have higher Aggravations than the Sin of any other Nation. The Holy Scriptures give the like Account of the
 Amos 1. 3. Destruction of *Damascus*, Thus saith the Lord, For three Transgressions of *Damascus*, and for four, I will
 Ver. 6. not turn away the Punishment thereof ; so of *Gaza*,
 of

* Καθεκάσόν μιν ἐν ἐπεξίειναι
 τῷ παρανομίαν αὐτῶν, ἀδύνα-
 τον· συνέλονίλα δ' εἰπεῖν, μὴ πό-
 λιν ἄλλω τοιαῦτα πεπονθέναι,
 μὴ γενεὰν ἐξ αἰῶν ὅ γε γένεαι
 κακίας γονιμώϊεν. Josephus de
 Bello Judaico Lib. 6. cap. 11.
 p. 933.

of Tyrus, of Edom, and of Ammon. And in- Ver. 6, 9,
form us that God raised up Cyrus, calling him 11, 13.
by his Name before he was in being, for the Pu-
nishment of the Sins of Babylon, &c. Thus saith Isa. 45. 11.
the Lord to his Anointed, to Cyrus, whose Right-
hand I have holden to subdue Nations before him:
and I will loose the Loins of Kings to open before
him the two-leaved Gates, and the Gates shall
not be shut. I will go before thee, and make the Ver. 2.
crooked places straight. For Jacob my Servant's Ver. 4.
sake, and Israel my Elect, I have even called thee
by thy Name: I have surnamed thee though thou
hast not known me. And does not prophane Hi-
story tell us, among other Instances of this kind
that might be heaped up, That as the Pride and
Voluptuousness of the Babylonians, so the Lewd-
ness of the Persians, and the Luxury of the
Greeks, seem'd, with their other Sins, to be the
remarkable Causes of the Ruine of those Em-
pires: And that the Romans, who had been a
People so Eminent in their
Morals, that * St. Austin * Gloriam terrenam excellen-
thought that God might al- tissimi imperii concessit, ut
low them the Government of redderetur merces bonis ar-
the World for the Reward of tibus eorum, id est, virtutibus
their Virtue, even under the quibus ad tantam gloriam per-
Advantages of the Christian venire nitebantur, &c. Aug.
Religion || became so very de- de Civ. De. lib. 5. cap. 15.
generate and debauched before
the Devastations and Ruine of || Quanta autem vitia Roma-
their Empire by the poor Goths, norum sint, quibus barbaræ
Vandals, and Huns, one of whose gentes non coinquantur, &c.
chief Leaders called himself Salvian de Gubern. D. lib. 6.
Flagellum Dei, the Scourge of God,
that, it seems, gave Occasion to
a Father to cry out, † That the

† In nobis patitur Christus
opprobrium, in nobis patitur
lex christiana maledictum.

Name of Christ became a Scorn, and the Christian Religion was reproached by the Lives of Christians. And to take some Notice of our own

Country, are we not acquaint-

|| Incolæ aborigines esse qui priscos adhuc vivendi mores retineant, mores ei simplices à versutia & improbitate nostræ tempestatis hominum longè remoti. *Diod. Sic. p. 301.*

Incolarum mores quod attinet; fuerunt antiqui Britanni religionis & disciplinarum cultores maximi. *Sher. de Angl. Gent. Orig. p. 14.*

Nunc Deo, interdum civibus, nonnunquam etiam transmarinis regibus ingrata confurgit. *Gildas de Excid. Britannia p. 391.*

ted, || that the Britains, the ancient Inhabitants of it, who had been remarkable for the Uncorruptness of their Manners, we degenerated from the Simplicity and Sobriety of their Ancestors, and were 'tis said, for that Reason forewarned of their Misery before the Romans invaded them; and that after the Romans quitted their Country there succeeded a great Licentiousness; very many after their embracing the Christian Religion turning Idolaters,

before the Saxons Invasion of them; a poor People, but it seems of more honest Manners, that came from the Northern Parts of Germany; and that before their next sad Catastrophe by the Normans Conquest of this Nation, Piety and all good Literature were grown out of Fashion; that the Clergy could scarce read Divine Service; that the Gentry were given up to Luxury, and a dissolute Life, and the meaner sort spent what they had in Rioting, Drunkenness, and other Vices, by which means (saith the Historian) Duke William had so great Advantage, and gained the Conquest of them: from whence our English Writers conclude the Saxon History almost in the same Words, and to this Effect. If these (say they, speaking of their Sins)

were

were in all probability the Causes of God's Judgments on our Ancestors, surely every one in this corrupt Age ought to take care to avoid them, lest the same Judgments fall upon them. And lastly, to add no more, have not the formerly famous Asian and Greek Churches, if not some of the Protestant, in several Parts of the World, which are miserably oppressed, and brought almost to Desolation within a few Years past, (of whose dreadful Misery we have had so many living Testimonies among us) been lookt on as sad Instances to confirm us in the Opinion of Ages, That Religion and Virtue are the only firm Foundation for the Prosperity of any Nation, and Irreligion the most fatal Evil to it: That where there is a general Corruption of Manners things tend to a Dissolution and Ruine, as well by Natural consequences, with the Permission of God, as by his Righteous Judgments; and that therefore it is not to be expected that the crying Sins of a Nation will always escape Punishment unless prevented by Repentance; for the same Causes produce the same Effects. Virtue and Vice do not change their Nature, and *there is no Variableness with our God, whose Justice is immutable.* Did not our Fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this Evil upon us, and upon this City? says the Prophet. And therefore, if after all that our Fathers have told us of these things, and what some of us have moreover seen with our own Eyes; I mean the late terrible Civil Wars, which, I hope, none will believe for our Piety and Virtue broke out, and lasted so long among us within some of our Memories, and which was soon after succeeded with a dreadful Fire and Plague in this City, and the Misery

Neh. 13. 18.

that is since that fallen upon our Fellow-Christians in *France*, in *Hungary*, and the *Palatinate*, we make no better use of what we have seen and heard, and of the various Providences we have been under, than to oppose the Design of them, by continuing impenitent, have we not great reason to fear, that God may either rescue his Gospel from our prophane Outrages, our impious Violations, and give it to some other Nation, that may bring forth better Fruits of it, or in some other way, agreeable to his infinite Wisdom

Lev. 26. 18. and Justice, *punish us yet seven times more for our Sins ? Or as Ezra expresses it on another Occa-*

Ezra 9. 13. *sion : And after all that is come upon us for our Evil deeds, and for our great Trespass, seeing that Thou, our God, hast punished us less than our Iniquities deserve, and hast given us such Deliverance*

Ver. 14. *as this : Should we again break thy Commandments and join in Affinity with the People of these Abominations, wouldst not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping ? The Almighty God cannot*

*The general
Depravation
of Man-
ners in this
Nation does
threaten its
Ruine.*

want Power to effect our Ruine. If we reckon our selves secure by our present Peace, from a late powerful Enemy, (which I shall not here enquire into the Reasons of) He can raise up new ones to us. And if we have no Enemies from Abroad, He can suffer us to become our own greatest Enemies, to fall into Confusion and Ruine by our unchristian Quarrels and unhappy Divisions at Home, which are too many and too high to make this appear to thinking Men a foreign Supposition, or an unnecessary Warning, If he stops the Influences of Heaven, or lets loose the Elements upon us, we perish. A Pestilence, or a Deluge, an Earthquake, or a Dearth, might soon

soon destroy us. And if a general Relaxation of Manners, a Corruption in most, if not all Orders and Parties; if a visible Contempt of the sincere Practice of Religion, and bare-fac'd, insolent and unrestrained Wickedness; if a monstrous Debauchery in Principles as well as Practice; if Contentions and Divisions, without reason and without end, and almost without Example; if high Ingratitude to God for many and great Mercies, and a deep Insensibility under imminent danger of Judgments, are sad Indications of a Nation's Degeneracy and Guilt, it cannot, I think, be denied, but that this was too near the dismal Case of *England*, in relation to Religion, when the Endeavours of Reformation, which I have given an account of, began among us, about Eight Years since, (how much soever we may dislike the Representation of it) and to speak plainly, continues very much so still; and therefore, tho' God may give a People a longer or shorter time of Tryal, as seems fit to his infinite Wisdom, He may defer the Execution of his Wrath *till the Iniquities of a People be at the full*, which the longer it is delayed, the severer it may be when it comes. And tho' it is not for us rashly to say, when a Nation hath filled up the Measure of its Sins, and much less to presume to know the Extent of infinite Patience and Forbearance, yet it may, I think, be said in this Case, with Reverence, that considering the great Advantages and Blessings we have so long enjoyed, and what shameful Returns we have made to God for them, there seems not much, if any thing more to be wanting, to make this Nation as guilty as most under Heaven, and to give us a just fear of approaching Judgment, than

Gen. 15. 16.

The general and united Endeavours of good Men for the Effecting of a National Reformation the best Expedient for the Preventing of our Destruction.

than the Discountenance and Unsuccessfulness of pious and regular Endeavours for the Reformation; and nothing, I think, can be more reasonably supposed sufficient to remove our Guilt, than some considerable and remarkable Reformation, and perhaps carried through all Ranks and Orders of Men through all Parts of the Kingdom; such a one as may be in some measure proportioned to the Leprosie of Vice and Prophaneness that seems to have almost overspread us. But if we do truly repent of all our Abominations, and turn from our wicked ways; if we lay aside our unnecessary Strifes, and our unchristian Contentions with one another, which we have so long felt the dismal Effects of; if we express our Zeal, and unite our Strength against the Patrons of Vice, who are the Enemies of God and Goodness, more than against those that differ from us in some few things, and those of lesser moment, but agree with us, I conceive, in those that are essential; if we sincerely, and without delay, set about and further all pious and proper Endeavours for a National Reformation, truly pursue the things that belong to our Peace, it still seems with us a Day of Mercy, and the

Jer. 18. 7, 8. Scriptures give us Encouragement to hope, that we may not perish. For thus it is said, *At what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their Evil, I will repent of the Evil that I thought to do unto them.*

Having thus endeavoured to prove the Common Obligation which lies upon All Men, as Christians, and as Members of the Community, to use their sincere Endeavours for a General and National

National Reformation ; and the *Special Obligations* of *Governours* and *Ministers*, of *Subordinate Magistrates* and *Inferior Officers*, from either the *Nature* of their *Office* and *Trust*, or their *express Oaths* to this *Purpose* ; and having more largely insisted on the *Reasons* for *private Persons* giving of *Informations* of the *Violations* of the *Laws* of *Religion* and their *Country* ; and the *Magistrates Obligation* highly to encourage those who do so, to make this their excellent *Service* to their *Country* as safe and as easie to them as they can, by directing their *Judgments*, excusing their innocent *Inadvertencies*, by making *Examples* of any obstinate *Criminals* that shall dare impiously to affront and obstruct them in it ; and having likewise represented the *Danger* of *God's Judgments*, and of *our Ruine*, if we continue unreformed ; and the *Blessings* and *Advantages* that we may hope to obtain to our selves, our *Country*, and our *Posterity*, in the hearty forwarding just and pious *Designs* and *Endeavours* for such a *Reformation* ; as *Virtue* is the way to the *Happiness* of particular *Persons*, of private *Families*, and to the *Prosperity* of *Nations* ; and the *Suppressing* of *Vice* and *Prophaneness* by *Humane Laws*, that are agreeable to the *Laws* of *God*, seems to be the nearest and most probable way, in our present *Circumstances*, for the retrieving of the *Virtue* of the *Nation* ; (without which, if we could suppose that this *Kingdom* would continue to be prosperous, I do not easily conceive how wise and good *Men* should either take much *Pleasure* in *Living* otherwise than in *Obedience* to the *Will*, and for the *Glory* of *God*, and the working out their own *Salvation*, or in the

Thoughts

Thoughts of leaving a Posterity behind them in a Nation where there is no more Religion, or even common Honesty) I intended, I say, having done this, in the next place to offer some Arguments against those Vices that are most reigning among us; as *Lewdness, prophane Swearing and Cursing, Drunkenness, &c.* in hopes that the Representation of the Baseness, the Folly and Bestiality of those Sins, together with the various and great Mischiefs they bring upon the Publick, but more especially often upon those unhappy Men that are addicted to them, in respect to their Estates and Reputation, their Persons and Posterity, their Bodies and Souls, would shew so much the Evil and Deformity of them, that it might be a means to keep some at least from falling in Love with them, and of disengaging others from them who are already ensnared in them, even as the Sight of a Drunkard to a thinking Man is a good Lecture against Drunkenness: But these Sheets growing to a Bulk, far beyond what I at first proposed, I shall lay aside, perhaps for some other Occasion, the

* Matt. 5. Materials which were prepared for this purpose; and I shall the rather do so, since * these Vices are plainly condemned by the Word of God, which expressly excludes *Drunkards and Unclean Persons, &c. from the Kingdom of Heaven*; and that we find, by sad Experience, that those who are fully reconciled to their Lusts, who are miserably abandoned to the Conduct of Custom and ill Example, seem too generally almost Deaf to the Calls of Conscience, to all Representations of this kind, nay, often even to the powerful Rhetoricks of the Gospel; at least they frequently make, for want of Consideration, and other proper

28, 34.
Matt. 15.
18, 19.
Rom. 1. 24.
--27. 29.
--13, 14.
1 Cor. 6. 9,
10. -13. 18.
Gal. 5. 19.
21.
Eph. 5. 3,
5, 6.
Col. 3. 5, 6.

proper

proper means, no great and lasting Impressions upon them. And this, I conceive, makes the use of other Methods with such Men necessary, not only for their own sakes, but for the Publick Safety, that those that are Lethargick, and almost *dead in their Sins*, yet having Senses still to feel the Stroaks of Justice, may, tho' never so stubborn, be bowed in some measure to discipline, and punish'd into a better outward Behaviour, if they cannot into such a serious Consideration of their Sin and Folly as may end in an inward and entire Reformation of their Lives, which is by no means to be despaired of. For as the allowed Habits of these Sins exclude Men from the Kingdom of Heaven, in the Opinion of Divines, they ought to shut out those who are guilty of them from the Communion with the Church on Earth, till they give some Signs of their Repentance, as, 'tis allowed, they would have done if they had lived in the first Ages of Christianity, when such Offenders, which now make too great a Part of the visible Church, were looked on as a kind of Monsters, and, like putrefy'd Members, were cut off, as being not only extremely dangerous, but very noisome to the Body. But till the Ecclesiastical Power, which is now so weakned, and hath, to speak justly, lost its Credit, is recovered to its Primitive Design, and the ancient Discipline of the Church is in some measure restored, which, 'tis to be hoped, we shall not always think sufficient, especially under the present Reign, publickly to lament the loss of once a Year, in the Office for *Ash-Wednesday*, but shall in good earnest endeavour to restore. There is, I conceive, evidently greater reason to engage the secular Arm

in

in this matter, that those upon whom the gentle Methods of Perswasion have little or no force, and whom the Ecclesiastical Power does not, and will not, take any Notice of, should be severely punished, and restrained by the Civil Government; that they should be treated as a sort of Out-Laws, and as common Enemies to their Country: For publick Immoralities are Offences against the Peace and Happiness of Mankind, against the Government and the Laws, as well as against the Christian Religion, which is not only now incorporated into the Law of the Land, but does above all other things promote the Safety and Prosperity of Government, and of particular Persons, which Offences of this kind directly tend to the destroying of, even to the dissolving the band of Humane Society; and if so, surely it behoves good Men, by all proper measures, to assist Magistrates in their Endeavours effectually to suppress them. If bad Men don't approve of these Methods 'tis no wonder; they are Enemies to good Order, Law and Justice, because these things are troublesome to them. There is no doubt but the *Gallows* is a great Grievance to Murtherers, the Discipline of *Bridewell* to Whores, the *Pillory* to the Perjured, and the *Stocks* to Drunkards: But such Grievances as these are, I conceive, of near as long standing as Government, and will not be thought proper to be laid aside whilst it lasts, or at least till there is not so much Occasion for them, since, as hath been proved, its Interest and chief Business is to cherish and support Religion, and, by consequence, to take care that it be not treated with any disrespect, particularly, that it be not made the Scorn of any Order or Body of Men,

Men, the common Subjects of prophane Play-Houses, or the Sport of Buffoons; and that the open Violations of it by *Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Drunkenness, Lewdness, &c.* be suppressed, as all wise Nations, I conceive, have ever done, and ever will do.

Against these Enormities therefore, that are the Plagues of Government, the Enemies of our Peace, the Dishonour of our Religion, and the Reproach of our Nation, have the *Societies of Reformation* applied themselves, with so great Success, as to give so very promising hopes as have been represented, of a general Concurrence and Union of the Virtuous part of the Nation in the same Design, and in consequence of a National Reformation; and their Endeavours have been carried on, as hath been observed, for above *Eight Years*, with as little or less occasion given to their Enemies of Objection either to the Methods of their Proceedings, or to the Behaviour of the Persons concerned in them, as perhaps have been often known in matters of the greatest consequence, where such a number of Persons have been engaged, (tho' if the Prudence of some good Men, who are either already engaged, or that shall hereafter be concerned in this Undertaking, is or should be less than their Zeal, it will, I hope, be far from giving wise and well-meaning Men a just Prejudice to the Design it self, or keeping them from Assisting in it.) But, blessed be God, a more glorious Prospect hath been lately given us by the *Address* of the late House of Commons to His Majesty, for the Suppressing of *Prophaneness and Debauchery*, and His Majesty's *Proclamation* in pursuance of it, and His princely Word in
His

Rom. 13. 4.
Ver. 3.

His Gracious *Speech* to both Houses of Parliament. We have now then, 'tis evident, His Majesty's positive Commands, together with the concurrent Advice in this Matter of the late great Representative Body of the Commons of *England*, for things, I conceive, not only unquestionably lawful, but highly important and necessary for the strict Execution of the known Laws of the Land against *Prophaneness* and *Immorality*, agreeable to the Word of God, that acquaints us, That the Magistrate *beareth not the Sword in vain*: That Rulers are not a Terror to good Works, but to the evil, &c. Whoever therefore they are that in this Case oppose the King's Commands, who either openly obstruct, or secretly undermine the Endeavours of those who act in this Affair in Obedience to the Will of God, the Command of the King, and for the Good of their Country, will, I think, find it somewhat difficult to acquit themselves from great Impiety.

And now can any that love their God, their Religion, or their Country, hear of these transporting things without being affected thereby with greater Joy than any Success in their own secular Concerns would give them, and without thinking themselves under high Obligations, after they have pretended to Fast, and Pray, and Mourn for our publick Sins, for so many Years past, (as most, if not all Orders of Men and Parties among us have done) to do what they are able in their several Stations for the Suppressing of *Prophaneness* and *Immorality*, and for the perfecting of this great Work of REFORMATION, which, I conceive, it had been our Duty to promote, if we had not met with so much Encouragement and Assistance

Assistance from our Governours? But how much stronger Obligations do now lie upon us to do it? And how shameful and inexcusable will our Neglect of it be, now we have such an Opportunity by His Majesty's repeated Declarations for our Engaging in it, by the Advances that are already made, and the Methods that are laid, as perhaps may never again be offered us if we neglect this? in Prosecution whereof it would, I think, become us to adventure all our dearest Interests in this World, nay, a Thousand Lives, if we had them to loose. Behold then a glorious Opportunity for all that make a Profession of Religion, or any Pretence to Virtue, of what Rank soever, to signalize their Love and Faithfulness to their great Lord and Master, their Neighbour, and their Country. To all *Orders of Men* therefore, whose Service His Majesty hath required to promote this great, this necessary Work, and who would not share in the dreadful Guilt and lasting Infamy of Neglecting and refusing to promote a *Reformation of Manners*, which now seems to be put very much in our Power, with God's Blessing, to see effected, I ask leave, upon these glorious Encouragements, with all due respect, to address my self.

To the NOBILITY, that they would be *A particular Address to the Nobility to promote a National Reformation.* pleased to consider, That true Greatness doth not consist in the having of swelling Titles, high Places, great Power, or large Territories, which tho' they may be sometimes the Reward of virtuous and brave Actions, as they ought to be, are often the Gifts of Nature, and it may be too frequently the Acquests of such Crimes as deserve Punishment instead of Recompence: That

H the

the Persons who in all Ages have been most beloved and revered when Alive, and most honoured by wise and good Men when Dead, have been those who have been most beneficent and serviceable to the World ; not those who have amassed the greatest Estates, and acquired the loftiest Titles to themselves : The blind Heathens erected not their Altars to those that they did not think were some way or other serviceable to Mankind : That they would therefore be perswaded, that nothing will render them so much Blessings to their Country, so truly noble and esteemed, as their being Patrons of Religion and Virtue : That they are not in their high Stations too great for that Employment, which is the greatest Glory of Princes, to set up their Standards for Religion, and declare War against

* Quam difficile est Principem sui dissimilem formare Rempublicam.

Si velis replicare memoriam temporum, quæcunque mutatio morum in principibus extiterit, eandem populo secutam.
Cic. lib. 3. de Legibus.

Vice and Prophaneness, after the * Example, and under the Authority of such a Prince and Leader as hath in his late *Proclamation* graciously required it of them, and hath declared, in his *Speech* to both Houses of Parliament, that *He esteems it one of the greatest Advantages of Peace, that he is now at Leisure to apply himself to the Suppressing of Prophaneness and Immoralities ;* and hath thereby given us some reason to hope, that He may think it a far greater Glory of his Reign to be an Instrument in God's Hand of delivering us from the Slavery of our Vices, of making us a virtuous, and, by consequence, a happy People, than in procuring us any other present and secular Felicities and Advantages, and at last leaving

leaving us deluged in such Impieties as Infidels abhor, and which may make God our Enemy, and draw down his Vengeance upon us : That they would for this purpose consider the Influence of their Authority, their Interest, their Revenues, and their Example, and employ (which they cannot without high Ingratitude omit) these and other Advantages they have above Men of lower Ranks, for the Glory of that God, by whose Permission they have them, for the Noble Purposes of Opposing and Suppressing Debauchery and Prophaneness, the Retrieving the Reputation of Virtue, the Furthering the Interests of Religion, and the Saving of their Country, which hath seemed to have declared in favour of Vice and Ruine, and thereby approve themselves to the King, as He hath now assured them they will, to the wise and virtuous part of the Nation, to their own Consciences, to their Posterity, and, above all, to the most High God.

To the Reverend the CLERGY, That *To the Clergy.* they who are looked upon as the Ambassadors of the Great God of Heaven and Earth, and sent upon the most important Business of *Reconciling* 2 Cor. 5. *Men to God,* and *Watching for their Souls,* and 18. 20. have, as I conceive, their Honour, their Dignities and their Revenues given them, without the common Incumbrances of other Men, in regard to their Sacred Office, and that they may attend without Worldly Cares, and with the greatest Advantage to their Spiritual Employment, would consider, whether they have not a more favourable Opportunity for the Work of their Ministry, and a National Reformation, at this

H 2

time,

time, than they have had for many Years past. They cannot, I humbly presume, but be sensible of the most deplorable Degeneracy of this Nation, that the great Decay of Religion, and the Leprosie of Vice and Prophaneness with which it is almost over-spread, does threaten its Ruine; and that they have great reason to take to heart the no greater Success of their Endeavours for the Reforming of us; that their Discipline, which if it had been in force, might have proved a Bank against the Flood of Wickedness that is broken in upon us, is now so lost, that it is of little use to them for this purpose; that there appears too great ground to fear, that the Tide of Wickedness will not be stoped whilst Religion is openly dishonoured, Virtue despised, and Vice and Prophaneness are so daring and triumphant, that Men commit them not only with Impunity, but Glory in them, so as to esteem it an Act of Gallantry to ridicule their Sacred Office, to contemn things Sacred, and an Ornament of Style to imprecate Damnation upon themselves and others. Is not this a Time for them that are

Isai. 52. 8. *Spiritual Watchmen, and Overseers of the Flock of*
 --56. 10. *Christ, as they have a Concern for God's Honour,*
 Act. 20. 28. *and would prevent his Judgments falling upon*
 us; as they would consult the Honour and Interest of their Sacred Order, and their own Reputation, to concur with His Majesty's pious Declarations for this purpose, and cheerfully to embrace the Assistance of the Civil Power for the Vindicating of the Honour of God's Laws, the Stoping the Avenues to notorious Enormities, the breaking the hellish Confederacies, and the taking out of publick View the contagious Examples of bad Men; and by these Methods to

prepare

prepare Men the better for the Restoration of
godly Discipline, for the greater Influence of
their Doctrine, and good Examples upon their
Minds? Is not this a Time for them to favour
the successful Endeavours of the *Societies of Re-
formation*, which are levell'd at the strong holds
of Debauchery; and the *Religious Societies*, that
are now spreading through the Kingdom, that
seem so directly to tend to the Promoting the
Power of Religion, so far as they carry on those
great Ends, (wherein we may, I think, appeal
to the whole Christian World whether they do
not do it) and readily to accept of the Assistance
that is now, or hereafter may be given them
by Christians of any Denomination, in the com-
mon cause of Christianity? And if they can
think of any other or better Measures than those
that are recommended in these Papers, that may
promote the Glory of God, and the Good of
Souls, *for whom Christ died*, and their own com-
fortable Account of themselves to Him *that will* 2 Tim. 4.
judge the Quick and the Dead, to engage in them I, 2.
without delay, with united Counsels and En- Acts 20.
deavours, with double Diligence and Zeal, and 20, 21.
in Conjunction with all the various Works of * Dr. Stil-
their Ministry, among which their going from lingfleet the
House to House for the enquiring into the Spiritual late Bishop
State of the Souls of those that are committed of Worces-
to their Charge, and the applying proper Dire- ter's Charge
ctions and Encouragements accordingly, in the to the Clergy
Judgment of the most pious Divines I have had of his Dio-
the Honour to know, is thought to be a very cess, p. 25.
useful Method, is what * one of the most Learned † The Bishop
Prelates of this Age and Nation hath in his print- of Salisbu-
ed Charge to the Clergy of his Diocess put them ry's *Pasto-*
in mind of; and which † another of our Learn- ral Care, p
295, 207.

ed Bishops hath told this Sacred Order, in his *Pastoral Care*, published by the particular Approbation of the late Great Primate Arch-Bishop Tillotson, is to be lookt on as the Foundation (an Exemplary Life being supposed) on which all the other parts of the Ministerial Office may be well managed; and which, he says, will seem no hard matter to such as have a right sense of their Ordination Vows, of the Dignity of their Function, or the Value of Souls.

To the Subordinate Magistrates.

To the Subordinate MAGISTRATES of all kinds, That they would make just Reflections upon that terrible and lasting Imputation that they do now lie under by His Majesty's Proclamation, (which is to be read Four times a Year in all Churches, and at the Assizes and Sessions throughout the Nation) and the Address of the late Honourable House of Commons to the King, of their being so great a Cause of the Debauchery and Prophaneness of the Kingdom, by their ill Examples and Negligence in their Office: That they would consider, as hath been observed, how many Nations have been ruined, and Cities brought, to a heap of Rubbish, for their Immoralities, which the Magistrates Vigilance might have prevented. That Power comes from God, the Fountain of all Power; and that they are supposed to be entrusted with it for his Honour, and the Good of his People: That by their faithfully Executing the Laws against Offenders, particularly those that are made for the Honour of God, the Suppressing of Prophaneness and Immorality, they are to be a Terror to evil doers; and in order to this, that they would therefore remember, That as the poorest Wretch hath

a Talent

a Talent that he must render an Account of, they Mat. 25. 14,
must expect one Day to appear at a Tribunal 15, &c.
themselves, and give an account of the discharge
of their Oaths and Trusts, of the Employment
of their Authority, and their other Advantages,
and for the Deluge of Evils that either hath or may
fall upon the Nation through their wilful neg-
lect of their Duty; for our Blessed Saviour hath
told us, That unto whomsoever much is given, of Luk. 12. 48.
him shall be much required. And the Author of
the Book of Wisdom thus expresses himself to this
purpose; Hear therefore, O ye Kings, and under- Wisd. 6. 1.
stand; learn, ye that be Judges of the Ends of the
Earth. Give ear, you that rule the People, and Ver. 2.
glory in the Multitude of Nations; for Power is Ver. 3.
given you of the Lord, and Sovereignty from the
Highest, who shall try your Works, and search out Ver. 4.
your Counsels, because, being Ministers of his King-
dom, you have not judged aright, nor kept the Law,
nor walked after the Counsel of God. Horribly and
speedily shall he come upon you: for a sharp Judg- Ver. 5.
ment shall be to them that be in high Places. For
Mercy well soon pardon the Meaneſt, but mighty Ver. 6.
Men shall be mightily tormented.

To the GENTRY and COMMONALTY To the Gen-
of the Nation, that they consider, That tho' they try and
have not the particular Oaths and Vows, the Commonal-
Trusts and Authority of any of the Orders I ty.
have mentioned, they have notwithstanding
their Baptismal Engagements upon 'em, which
they own when they come to the Holy Com-
munion; and that if they would acquit them-
selves as Christians, they must endeavour to be
such in all their Relations; to behave themselves
as good Magistrates and Subjects, as good Citi-
zens,

zens, and Members of their Community, as well as good Masters and Servants, good Parents and Children; but that they cannot be reasonably thought to be so without having a Love to God, a Zeal for his Honour, or a Concern for the Welfare of their Neighbours, and of the Community of which they are a part; and that it may be doubted whether they can have either, if they can contentedly hear, without any concern, Men openly affront their God, bid defiance to his Laws, go on with a full Career to Destruction, and bring Decay and Ruine upon their Country, when, 'tis evident, they may use proper means to prevent them, among others, particularly by their giving of Informations of enormous Offences to the Magistrate, (which I have in another place more largely insisted on) and which they have at this time so fair an Opportunity to employ as is offer'd them by the Declarations of the Government, and the Assistance of such Bodies of Christians that are not only in and about this City, but that are spreading through the Cities and Corporations of the Kingdom. And do you think it dishonourable for you to conceal any Offences that endanger the Government, or any Injuries that are done to your Neighbour, when you can do him right by the bare discovering of it to the Magistrate? Is it reckoned an Act of Bravery to adventure your Lives in the taking of a Thief, or Murtherer? an Act of Charity to prevent any Injury to your Neighbour in his Civil Concerns; to hinder a Fool or a Lunatick from wounding of his Body, or destroying his Life? And is not a sincere endeavour to prevent the publick Dishonour of the Name, the Day, and the Laws of God, by acquainting the Magistrate with

with these high Offences, in order to the Suppressing of them, as is done with general Approbation and Applause in other ordinary Cases, when Mens private Rights, the Security of the Government, or the Welfare of the Nation is concerned, an honourable Work, and becoming Christians? Does it become a Disciple, a Soldier of Christ Jesus to see him publickly affronted; to hear his Name and Wounds mentioned, in a Christian State, oftner in horrid Oaths and Exclamations than in serious Discourses; his Laws trampled on; and their Fellow-Christians to live in the open Commission of such Sins as manifestly tend to bring great Calamities upon them in this World, to destroy their Souls, and draw down National Judgments, without taking any kind of Notice of these things, and only for fear of meeting with reproachful Words, or rude Treatment (which yet the Magistrate, if he hath a just Sense of his Duty, will not suffer) from a hardened Offender, or the Advocates of Vice; from such whose Commendations a virtuous Man would be inclined to look on as a real Disparagement, and their Company a Scandal, and when, in the discharge of what they justly apprehend to be their Duty, they may have, for their Comfort and Support, some of the great Rewards of Religion in this World, the Approbation of their own Consciences, and of good Men, with the hopes of an Everlasting Reward on the other side of the Grave? Can this be imagined to be a *Matth. 22.* signification of Zeal for God, of our *Loving Him* 37, 38, 39. *with all our Hearts, &c.* or our *Neighbour as our* *Tic. 2. 10,* *selves?* Does this Behaviour *adorn the Gospel?* Would the Christians of old have thought well of it? Or is it sufficient for us to call our selves the

Act. 10. 38. the Disciples of the Blessed Jesus, *who went about doing good*, without endeavouring, in any degree, to follow his glorious Example?

Herein then our Gentry and Commonalty seem to have a great Opportunity of furthering the Work of Reformation: But this is not all the Advantage they have, if the Laws that relate to Religion are upon so many and such momentous Considerations thus zealously to be put in Execution, it is, I think, evident, that not only those Persons that violate and contemn those Laws, but those that are unconcerned for, and discourage the Execution of them, cannot, with any Colour of Reason be esteemed Friends to their Country, but rather as unworthy to live in it, and enjoy the common Benefits of it; * and if

* *Magnam justitiæ & virtutis partem habet, qui honore dignos honorat.*

In Civitate studiosa felicitatis nunquam opes anteponi debent virtuti, nè hanc ob

so, they are unquestionably much more unfit for, and unworthy of *Posts of Honour and Trust*; and those that concern themselves for the Election or Promotion of such Persons to publick Places, when Men of Virtue may be easily found to accept of them, and perhaps offer themselves to their Choice, upon the Account of their Titles or Estates, of their Relation or Friendship to them; and I think I may further add, for their being of their Faction or Party, may deservedly be judged to behave themselves very unbecoming good Common-Wealths-Men and good Chri-

causam omnibus desiderio divitiarum captis, contemptus & neglectio virtutis innascatur animis in republica. Nam ubi virtus spernitur, potentes omne malorum genus producant.

Omnes quidem Magistratus in bene constituenda republica convenit esse virtute præditos, sed maximè eos qui Senatoriæ dignitatis gradum obtinent. Unde in antiquorum rebus publicis statuae, arcus triumphales, sepulchra publica, laudationes, & alia id genus meritis tribuantur. *Grim. de Opt. Sen. p. 194.*

stians,

stians, to act therein as very mischievous Members of the Community, and even Enemies to their Religion and Country; on the contrary, they who are truly Religious, who not only keep the Laws themselves, but are diligent to execute the Laws, or zealously encourage and assist others in the furthering the Execution of them, are to be looked on by those that make any just pretence to Virtue, as Benefactors to the Community, of which they are Members, and as proper Persons to be honourably distinguished, which it behoves all Men to consider, who are any ways concerned in this Matter, and would shew their sincere Regard for the Interest of Religion or their Country, particularly the *Gentry and Commonalty of England*, to whom I am addressing my self, in the Election of their Representatives in Parliament, of Magistrates in Corporations, and Subordinate Officers in them, and all other Places throughout the Kingdom, * on whose Behaviour the Welfare of the Nation does so much depend, lest when they might have served the true Interests of Religion and the Nation, by their making Choice of such worthy Persons as might have proved great Blessings to us, if they had been thus employed, by their Faith-

* Εγὼ δὲ φη-
μι, τὰς μὲν
ἰδέας τῶν
πολίτειων
τρεῖς εἶναι
μόνας, ὀλι-
γαρχίαν, δη-
μοκρατίαν,
μοναρχίαν.
τῶν δὲ ἐν
ταύταις οἰ-
κέντων, ὅσοι

μὲν εἰώθασιν ὅτι τὰς ἀρχὰς καθιστάναι, καὶ τὰς ἀλλὰς πράξεις τὰς ἰκα-
νωτάτας τῶν πολιτῶν, καὶ τὰς μέλλοντας ἀρετῇ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ τῶν
πραγμάτων ὀφειστέον, τέτρες μὲν ἐν ἀπάσαις ἢ πολιτείαις καλῶς
οἰκῆσαι, καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτοὺς, καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἀλλὰς. τὰς δὲ τοῖς πονηρο-
τάτοις, καὶ θρασυτάτοις ὅτι ταῦτα χρωμένους, καὶ ἢ μὲν τῇ πόλει συμ-
φερόντων μηδὲν φροντίζουσιν, ἡδὲ δὲ τὴν αὐτῶν πλεονεξίαν ἐτοίμοις εἶναι
ὅτι ἔν πάσῃ, τὰς δὲ τέτων πόλεις ὁμοίως οἰκῆσαι, ἢ δὲ πρὸς ἑαυτῶν
πονηρίας, θέλοντας, πᾶσι αὖ τὸναντίον κακίαις ἑαυτοῖς τῆς καὶ τοῖς
πολίταις ἢ νομίζω τὰς δὲ τοιούτους ἐναλλάξ ποτὲ μὲν χειρὸν, ποτὲ
βέλτην πρᾶξαι. Isoc. Path. p. 513.

fulness in their Trusts, and by the happy Influence of their good Examples ; they, on the other hand, by being instrumental in the Election or Promotion of vicious Men, especially after the evil of their doing so is represented to them, may perhaps draw a Guilt upon themselves, of *Partaking in other Mens Sins*, of being Accessory, in some degree, to the Mischief that is done by the Negligence and Unfaithfulness of such Persons in their Duty whom they make choice of, as well as by the malignant Influence of their ill Examples upon others. Hath God Almighty said by the Prophet, *Them that honour me I will honour ; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* Hath Holy David said, *Mine Eyes shall be upon the Faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me : He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me ?* Hath the King lately declared in his Proclamation, *That vicious Men are a discredit to his Kingdom, and that he will discountenance and punish Immorality and Prophaneness in Persons of the highest and lowest degree, particularly in such as are employed near his Royal Person ; and that he will, upon all Occasions distinguish Men of Piety and Virtue by Marks of his Royal Favour ?* And lastly, hath the Commons of England, assembled in a late Parliament, in their Humble Address to His Majesty, represented to Him, *That the Debauchery of the Nation is chiefly owing to the Negligence and ill Example of Magistrates ; and that the Countenancing and Preferring of Virtuous, and the Discouraging of Vicious Men, is a proper way to suppress it ?* And can any that have any Principles of Religion, and Love to their Country, that shall duly and impartially consider this, be instrumental in promoting of prophane and

and vicious Men to Places of Honour and Authority, and chuse to entrust with them the high Concerns of Religion and our greatest Temporal Interests? How far Ignorance, Prejudice, or Inconsideration, may have hitherto been an Excuse for any concerned herein, I shall not presume to determine, but I may be allowed to say, that 'tis to be hoped, it will not be hereafter pretended by any Men who are sincerely concerned for the Honour and Interest of Religion, and the Security and Prosperity of their Country, who having this Matter laid before them, shall not only consider the fatal Consequences of their own ill Conduct in this Matter, but the many and almost unspeakable Evils that this Nation hath so long groaned under by the Election and Promotion of wicked Men to Places of Honour or Power; and, on the contrary, what a glorious Face of Things we might expect to see, if Men of all Ranks, as well as those to whom I am addressing my self, would acquit themselves herein, as Natural Reason as well as Religion may convince them they ought, in the discouraging or Opposing, in their several Stations, the Election and Promotion of wicked Men to publick Posts, and thereby keeping them from doing so much Mischief as they have undeniably the greatest Advantage for their doing in them. * And if we will not be moved herein by either Religious or

* Σόλων ὁ σό-
φρος ἐκείνῳ
εἶπεν ἄριστα
τὴν πόλιν
οἰκεῖσθαι, ἐν
ᾗ τὰς ἀγα-
θὰς ἀνδρας
συμβαίνει τι-
μᾶσθαι κακά-
ς δὲ οἰκεῖ-
σθαι ἐν ᾗ τὰς
κακὰς
Σωκράτης

ἰσχυροὺς, τίς ἀρίστη πόλις, ἐν ᾗ, ἔφη, πλεῖστα ἀρετῆς ἀθλα. Stob.

Περὶ μὲν ἐν τῇ πολιτείᾳ οἶμαι πάνσι δοκεῖν δεινότατόν μιν εἶναι τὸ ἴ-
αυτῶν ἀξιῶσθαι τὰς χρηστὰς δὲ τὰς πονηρὰς, δικαιοτάτου δὲ πραττεῖν καὶ
τιμᾶσθαι καὶ τὴν ἀξίαν ἐκείσθαι. Isoc. Nic. p. 57.

Quod igitur ad respublicas attinet, omnes mihi assentiri arbitror, iniquissimum esse ut eadem bonis & improbis tribuantur, æquissimum vero ut ea cuiusque & fortuna sit, & dignitas quam meretur.

Civil

Δέγμεν τοί- Civil Considerations, I must ask leave to say,
 νον, ὅτι πό- that we are sunk below Heathenism in this re-
 λιν, ὡς ἔοικε, spect, the formerly famous * *Roman* and † *Gre-*
 καὶ μέμνησαν cian Common-Wealths having had a great re-
 σωζέμεν τὴν γὰρ to Virtue in the Choice of their Senators
 βουλευμονή- and Magistrates, which seems to have been one
 σιν εἰς δ' ὅ- of the greatest Causes of their Stability and
 ναν ἀν- Prosperity.
 θρωπίνω,

δεῖ καὶ ἀναγκαῖον τιμὰς καὶ ἀτιμίας ἀφανέμεν ὁρθῶς, ὅτι καὶ ὁρθῶς,
 ἀεὶ τιμιώτατα μὲν καὶ πρῶτα πᾶσι καὶ ψυχρὰ ἀγαθὰ κείνῳ, σωφροσύνης
 ὑπαρχέσης αὐτῇ. τέτων δὲ αὖ ἐκτὸς τίς βαίνει νομοθέτης ἢ πόλις, εἰς
 τιμὰν, ἢ χρήματα πρᾶγξασα, ἔθ' ὅσον, ἔτε πολίτικόν αἶδρω πρᾶγμα.
 Plato de Legibus lib. 3. p. 817.

Oportere dicimus Civitatem quæ pro humanis viribus salva fœ-
 lixque futura sit, rectè honores & opprobria distribuere, recta autem
 distributio est, ut prima & maxima honoranda censeantur animi bona
 si adjuncta illis temperantia sit. Hæc si quis Legislatores civitasve
 transgreditur, neque sanctè, neque civiliter facit.

* Is ordo, vitio careto, cæteris specimen esto. Præclara ista lex
 (ait Cicero) nam cum omni vitio carere lex jubeat, nè veniat in
 eum ordinem, unquam vitii particeps. *Cic. de Leg. l. 6. p. 336.*

Delecti quibus corpus annis infirmum, ingenium sapientia vali-
 dum. *Salust.*

In Senatoribus legendis, ætatis, Magistratus, &c. habita ratio.
Sigonius de Jure Civ. Rom.

In pluribus Romanum Senatum imitabantur Decuriones, nec mi-
 nor annis 25 Decurio creabatur, nec major 55, meritis enim & fa-
 cultatibus dignissimi eligebantur. *Panciroli de Mag. Rom. p. 3, 4.*

Eadem forma in elegendis Duumviris quæ in creandis Decurionibus
 observabatur, &c. Si fortè recusandi justam honoris causam habuissent,
 alii eorum loco congruo tempore substitui possent. *Panciroli p. 8.*

†. Apud Lacedæmonios Senatui & reliquis virtus potius & merita
 suffragabantur. Nam virtutis præcipuè habita fuit ratio, ut in aliis
 omnibus apud eos; ita etiam in quibusvis Magistratibus conferendis.
Nic. Cragius de Repub. Lacedæm. l. 2. p. 82. Ætas deinde justa
 lege quasi annuaria definita in Senatoribus fuit annorum 60. *Crag.*
lib. 2. p. 113. Cæterum vita honestè acta in Senatoribus præci-
 puè desiderabatur. *Crag. p. 114.*

And herein our Gentry and Commonalty καθίστασι δὲ
 have likewise manifestly greater Advantages αὐτοῖς ἐν
 and Opportunities for the Promoting of the τῆς ἐν παι-
 Work of Reformation, for the making one brave δὲ εἰς γή-
 Effort for the Interest of Religion and Virtue, εας σωφρο-
 for the Honour and Welfare of England, and νων. Æsch.
 thereby to recover the former Glory of their Tim.p.288.
 Ancestors, who were famous for their Virtue, Δίκαιόν μιν
 and love to their Country, and which appeared ὡς Λακεδαι-
 so glorious in the Heroes of the Gentile World. μόνιοι τῷτο
 γε τῇ πόλει
 ὑμῶν ὁποδι-

δόναι, ὅτι πένια καὶ πλῆθος, καὶ βασιλεία, καὶ ἰδιωτεία διαφέρουσιν, ἐδὲ
 ἥντινον τίμω καὶ τροφὴν νέμετε. 'Ου γὰρ δὴ δέη καὶ πόλιν τὴν εἶναι τὰς τι-
 μάς ὑποφύσσας ὅτι τις ἐστὶ πλῆθος διαφέρων ἀνευ τινὸς ἀρετῆς.
 Plato de Leg. lib. 3, p. 816.

'Αθλὸν ἡ ἀρχὴ αὐτὴ τῆς ἀρετῆς εἶναι. Aristot. de Repub. Laced.
 lib. 2. p. 330.

'Ανὴρ ἐν ἀγαθοῖς καὶ σωφροσίνῃ ἀριεὺς καὶ σωφρονίστατος, ἔδῃ κερδέντα,
 νικητερίον ἔχον τῆς ἀρετῆς διὰ βίης. Plutarch. Lycurg. p. 55.

Judicium apud Athenienses constituebatur quod illi δοκιμασίαν
 vocabant, in quo Senatorum qui lecti erant vita diligentèr exquire-
 batur. Sigon. p. 495.

Omnes oportebat Magistratus vitæ morumque suorum antequam
 Magistratum inirent rationem in foro apud judices reddere, nè quis
 Magistratum ullum gerere posset, qui impudicitiae aut alio turpitudi-
 nis genere notatus fuisset. Sigonius de Repub. Athen. lib. 2. p. 492.

Καὶ διὰ ταύτης ὥστε τὴν πόλιν, ἐκ ἐξ ἀπάντων τὰς ἀρχὰς κληρῶν-
 τες, ἀλλὰ τὰς βελτίους, καὶ τὰς ἰκανωτάτους, ἐφ' ἑκάστῳ τῆς ἔργων πορο-
 κρίναντες. Isoc. p. 285.

Noveinviri antequam assumerentur ad Magistratum illum de omni
 retrorsus vita acta causam dicere solebant; quod si nullam dedecoris
 labem perpetua innocentia contraxisse videbantur, ad τὴν ἀρχὴν ad-
 sumebantur, deinde ad Areopagiticum Senatum conscribantur, So-
 lonis lege. Petitus de Leg. Atticis p. 140. Ætatem Senatoriam
 definitam fuisse puto anno tricesimo. Petit. 186. Introducebantur
 autem omnes illi Magistratus quorum anteaactam vitam expendi, &
 in eam inquiri oportet. Pet. p. 223.

Ubi sorte capti fuerunt quingenti qui reipublicæ præessent inquiri-
 batur in eorum vitam moresq; &c. Pet de Leg. Atticis p. 191.

And

And for the Encouragement of those that are destitute of the Advantages of Riches and Honours, of Authority and Learning, to use their Diligence and Zeal in the Instances I have given, or in any other Expressions of their Duty for the Promoting of this Work, * I will put them in mind, that it hath been long observed, that the Persons who have been thought to have performed the bravest Actions, and done great Service to the World, have frequently been Men of obscure Birth and Parentage, who were without Riches and Honours, (and often, I conceive, without Learning;) of which a multitude of Instances might be given, if 'twas necessary here to insert them. That tho' 'tis freely allowed, that Authority and Quality, when they are accompanied with Virtue, as they ought to be, or when they are the Rewards of it, † which too seldom happens, are truly honourable, and enable those that have them to be more serviceable to the Interest of Religion, and the Good of Mankind, which is their proper Business; but when they are separated from Virtue, they render those that possess them truly scandalous, and highly pernicious. * 'Tis true likewise, That when Learning is moderately pursued for the Service of Religion, and Good of the World, it is both

* Si quis rem considerare velit, omnes eos vel saltem maximam partem eorum, qui in hoc toto terrarum orbe res præstantiores aggressi sunt, atque inter cæteros ævi sui heroes excelluerunt, aut obscuro aut abjecto loco editos, & prognatos fuisse abjectis parentibus, &c. *Vita Castrucci Castruciani* p. 1.

† Alii pro pecunia emunt Nobilitatem, alii illam lenocinio, alii beneficiis, alii parricidiis hanc comineruerunt; multis proditio nobilitatem, conciliavit, simulatque divitias peperit, plerique adulatione, detractatione, calumniis, Sycophantia. Multos venationes, rapinæ, cædes, præstigia, & aliæ malæ artes ad Nobilitatem promoverunt. *Agripp. de Nobil.* p. 348.

* Ut omnium rerum sic literarum quoque, intemperantia laboremus. *Sen. Epist.* p. 106.

innocent and laudable, and the Advantages of *Virtue* may it for those ends are confest; yet 'tis plain, from *be obtain-* too sad Experience, that 'tis too generally sought *ed without* upon base Considerations, and frequently ap- *great Parts* plied to very ill Purposes; as is allow'd, when *or Learning,* 'tis made use of for the Raifing of Heresies, the *is honoura-* Adulterating or Confounding the Simplicity of *rable with-* the Christian Doctrine with Philosophical No- *out Wealth* tions and Distinctions, or to the Raifing and Con- *or Authori-* tinuing of unnecessary and dangerous Disputes *ty, and qua-* out of Pride and Vanity, of Passion or Worldly *lifies Men* Interest, to the disturbing of the Peace of the *to do much* Church, the Ruine of Charity, and manifest In- *Good.* jury of Religion. † But as Virtue may be ob- † *Paucis o-* tained without great Natural Parts, or acquired *pus est lite-* Knowledge, as is evident by the Lives of the *ris ad men-* common Body of Christians in the first Ages, *tem bonam.* * and is honourable without any Ornaments *Illud adjun-* from Birth and Honour, Authority or Learning; *go sæpius ad* so it makes Men capable of doing much good: *laudem at-* Let them consider not only this; but further, *que virtu-* That it seems to please Almighty God sometimes, *tem, natu-* (as we may exprefs it) to raise the Spirits of *ram sine do-* Men above their natural pitch for great Perfor- *ctrina, quam* mances, to make use of mean and contemptible *sine natura* Instruments, in Humane Appearance, to bring *valuisse do-* about the great Ends of his Providence, where- *ctrinam. Cic.* by his Power seems to be more visible, and the *Orat. pro* Pride of Man to be more humbled; and that *Arch. p. 12.* *Surgunt in-* *docti & ra-* *piunt cœlos, & nos cum scientia nostra mergimur in infernum.* *August. ex Agrip. de Van. Scient. p. 7.*

* Nobilitas nil aliud sit quàm cognita virtus, quis in eo quem veterascentem videat ad gloriam, generis antiquitatem desiderat?

Sed genus & proavos & quæ non fecimus ipsi, Vix ea nostra voco.

Tota licet veteres exornent undique ceræ Atria, Nobilitas sola est atque unica virtus.

among the various Instances of this kind, which Sacred and Prophane History acquaint us with, he did so in the Publishing of Christianity, when
 1 Cor. i. 27. *he chose the foolish things of the World to confound the wise, and the weak things of the World to confound the things which are mighty; when he commissioned a few mean and illiterate Persons to preach the Gospel, which notwithstanding prevailed over the Policy and Learning, the Worldly Interest and Prejudice, the Strength and Opposition of the World; and that as then not many Wise Men after the Flesh, not many Mighty, Honour and not many Noble were called; so in the Ages since, tho' there have been of all Conditions, as well Noble, as Ignoble; Learned, as Illiterate; Kings, and Philosophers; Emperours, and States-Men, who have been devoted to Religion, have shewed the mighty Power and Energy of it, and adorned the Ages in which they have lived; yet it hath been an old Observation among Heathens as well as Christians, and 'tis a terrible one for great Men to reflect upon, * That Riches and Honours do in the Nature of them tend to corrupt Mens Minds, are great Clogs to Wisdom, mighty Obstructions in the Business of the Christian Warfare to those that possess them; and therefore that the Great and the Noble are too generally diverted and carried away from the One thing needful, the working out of their own Salvation, and consequently their being concerned for that of others, by the violent Temptations that their*
 * Luxuri-
 ant animi
 rebus ple-
 runque se-
 cundis.
 Prima pe-
 regrinos
 obscœna
 pecunia mo-
 res Intulit,
 turpi frege-
 runt secula
 luxu Divitiæ molles. Pecuniis augetur improbitas. Divitiæ se-
 culi sunt laquei diaboli.

Divitiæ rarò virtutis sunt comites. Vestes talaris Corpora, opes autem immensæ animas impediunt. Pietas, probitas, fides, privata bona sunt.

Condition exposes and subjects them to, which Persons of a lower Rank are much without; wherefore our Saviour hath assur'd us how hard *Matth. 19. it is for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of 23, 24. Heaven*; out of a sense whereof some Christians in most, I conceive, if not in all Ages, have refused Titles and Honours, and have renounced Riches and Worldly Grandeur; nay, Princes and Potentates, Kings, and Queens, have, we are told, forsaken their Crowns, their Fortunes and Territories, for a safe and Happy Retirement: And it accordingly appears, by the Account that is given of the *Endeavours* that have been so successful towards a *National Reformation*, That as they were not begun, so they have not been assisted by many of the Rich and Mighty, but by Persons of a lower Rank, who submitted to be reckoned Disturbers of the Publick Peace, Imprudent and Hypocritical Persons, &c. as the Christians of Old were by the Heathens, and as such will hardly fail to be, who in a corrupt Age shall faithfully go about to convince some Men of their Lukewarmness and neglect of their Duty, and to disturb the Generality in their Vices, for the effecting a National Reformation; who were willing, I say, to bear the Censures, the cruel Mockings, and the Frowns of the World, and perhaps some of them to hazard their Lives for the Vindicating of the Honour of the Laws of God, the Good of Souls, and the Service of their Country; and that tho it may perhaps be expected from the Character of some few of the Great and Noble among us, who seem to be much more honourably distinguish'd from those of their own Rank by their Virtue, than they are from those below them by their Quality,

lity, that they have it in their Inclinations, as it seems to be in their Power, with God's Blessing, to be Instruments of Reforming us from publick Prophaneness and Immoralities; yet that 'tis still to be feared, that great Men will not generally at least obtain of themselves to declare for oppressed Virtue, and engage in its Cause till it hath regained its Reputation more generally in the World, and it is accounted a Mark of greater Infamy to be vicious.

*Prophane-
ness and
Vice do
make Men
truly scan-
dalous, and
vicious Men
will daily
appear more
infamous a-
mongst us if
we continue
our united
Efforts a-
gainst them.*

Prophaneness and Debauchery have, in truth, been ever infamous in the Opinions of the wise and good Men in all Ages of the World, and treated as such by the Religion and Laws of Heathen Nations, as well as by the Christian Religion, and the Laws of our own Country; which Justice and Temperance, Chastity and Truth, never were, that I know of, by any; nay, there have never, I conceive, been many Men so lost to the Notions of Good and Evil, as seriously to set a Mark of Infamy upon some Men for their Virtue, or to make Panegyricks upon others for their Vices; and neither the Number or the Quality of those that are guilty of Prophaneness and Debauchery can any more alter the Nature of them, or can take off them that Infamy that the Law of God, the Laws of Nations, and the Law of Nature have fixt on them, than they can the Nature of Murther, Bribery, or Theft; and as they are infamous in their Nature, they will every day more appear to be so, if we continue to make our vigorous Efforts against them. It will not be thought creditable for Men of an inferior Rank to be carried through the Streets before the Magistrate, or to be put in the Stocks, to do there publick Penance for the

the Violation of Divine and Humane Laws: Or will it be Honourable for Men of Title or Authority, who have thought themselves unfit for gentile Conversation without a large share of Lewdness, have reckoned it Wit to Blaspheme, and have, within our Memories, 'tis believed, made their way to their Preferments by their Prophaneness and Debauchery, to have the Penalties of those Laws levied upon them in the Sight of their Neighbours or their Country; to be upon Record; and to be disabled for those Offences for Places of Honour, of Publick and Private Trusts; to be told before the Congregation *Four* times a Year by the King, in His *Proclamation*, that He reckons them to be a *Discredit to His Kingdom*, and strictly commands their being brought to *Punishment*; and by their Minister at the same time, that they ought to be avoided by Men of Religion, to be excluded from Christian Communion, till they reform, and that they will, unless they do so, be shut out of Heaven, and be condemned to unspeakable and everlasting Confusion and Torment? In short, we may in a little time see a Drunkard, a Lewd or a Prophane Person, tho' a Man of the greatest Quality or Estate, who now passes with too little Remark and Contempt, and is kept in countenance by the Multitude of Offenders of the same kind, make but a very scurvy Figure, be ashamed to shew himself in any Company but of such as are like himself, abandoned of a sense of true Honour as well as Religion, and shunned by all but the unclean Herd of the Vicious and Prophane, who may ere long be ashamed of one another in the Sight of the Sun, and may be forced to
I 3 converse,

|| Marcum
Catonem
Censorium
Romano
populo her-
culē profuit
nasci, quā
Scipionem,
alter enim
cum hosti-
bus bellum,
alter cum
moribus,
gessit. Sen.
Epist. 87.

converse, or rather to have their Gangs as High-
way-Men, Clippers and Coiners have, in dark
Corners, and in continual fear of being discover-
ed. This is but part of the glorious Prospect that
we have in View, whilst we continue to make our
vigorous Efforts against Vice and Prophaneness :
|| And is there any doubt whether they that acquit
themselves in this Noble Enterprize as they ought,
will entitle themselves to great Acknowledgments
from the present Age, and from Posterity, since
the Influence of their good Example, and the
happy Effects of their pious Endeavours may
last to succeeding Ages, as long as the Nation,
and perhaps the World will last ?

Let then the Men of the World, whose Hopes
terminate with this Life, pursue Honours and
Titles, and what in their foolish Language they
call their Worldly Advantages : Let them that
think of no other Happiness, court popular Air,
intrigue and fawn, drudge and scramble for little
Parcels of Earth, which if they meet with are
their Portion, attended * with Fear and Envy,
Jealousie and Hatred, Anxiety and Grief, which
are their secret and almost constant Tormentors,
* O si pe-
ctora pate-
ant divitum
quantos in-
tus sublimis

agit fortuna metus ? Brutio coro pulsante fretum mitior unda est.

Invidiā Siculi non invenere Tyranni Tormentum majus.

Quem mihi regem dabis non curis plenum ; non diadema aspi-
cias, sed vitam afflictione refertam, non catervas satellitum, sed cu-
rarum multitudinem.

Antigonus rex cuidam anui ipsum beatum prædicanti dixisse fertur,
Si scires, O mater, quam multorum malorum hic pannus scit (dia-
dema autem ostendebat) eum in stercore jacentem non tolleres.

Cur tu hos evasisse putes, quos diri conscia facti Mens habet attonitos
& furdo verberare cædet Occulto quatiante animo tortore flagellum ?

Non enim gaze neque consularis Summovet lictor miseros tumult-
us Mentis, & curas laqueata circum Tecta volantes.

and

and make them, as the Scripture expressees it, as *the troubled Sea that cannot rest* : But let those that can look on these deluded and miserable Souls with a just Pity ; that know the Pleasures of Innocence ; that are acquainted with the Triumphs of Conscience that arise from the sense of their having served their God, their Country, and themselves ; that hope, after a few Years, for an Everlasting Inheritance, and unspeakable Joy at God's Right hand ; that believe that our Blessed Saviour *Christ Jesus was manifested that* 1 Joh. 3. 8. *he might destroy the Works of the Devil*, think it more honourable to be employed in the Promoting the same Glorious Design to the utmost of their Power, and by all Christian Methods, according to their Abilities and Opportunities, than to be Favourites of the greatest Prince, than to be Masters of the World. We shall indeed meet with many Discouragements, and much Resistance in these Endeavours. The Reformation of a Nation, particularly that is so very degenerate, that a great part of it seems to act as if it had enter'd into a Combination against Religion, cannot be thought to be an easie Work ; we never, I suppose, heard of such a one in any Age that was effected without Opposition. The first Attempts especially of a National Reformation, unless they have the Advantages of Power, of Interest, or of Numbers of Men to support them, must (humanely speaking) be attended with great Difficulties ; those that are engaged in them may expect to wrestle not only against the Passions and Lusts of private Men, but against *Principalities and Powers*, against the Strength and Policy of the Prince, as well as Men of this World, since those that most need

1 Joh. 3. 8.

The various kinds of Opposition that may be expected to be encounter'd in the first Endeavours of a National Reformation.

Eph. 6. 12.

Reformation will most explode the Attempts of it, and oppose it ; and among them there will be such met with as by their Quality or Interest, their Power or their Authority, may be most capable to obstruct it ; and there will be others, who, when they have not Power, or they dare not publickly oppose the Undertaking, will be spreading their Jealousies, that some secular Interest or dangerous Design is carrying on under such plausible Pretences, and will use their utmost Diligence to find fault with the Manner (how regular soever it be) of its being carried on, or to raise Objections against the Persons engaged in it ; and when they cannot find any real ones, they will have recourse to their Inventions, to down-right Slanders, to mis-represent them, as the Heathen Persecutors did the Martyrs, to expose them the more to the Peoples Hatred and Rage ; nay, and that which makes the Work yet the more difficult is, that there will not be wanting another kind of Men, and some of the greatest Obstructions to the present Endeavours of Reformation are indeed, I conceive, some of the worst sort of Enemies to such a Design, who, through some unhappy Principles or Prejudices, will not only be content to sit still themselves, and to be unconcerned in this Matter, but perhaps to excuse themselves from giving that Assistance which might be otherwise with Modesty expected from them ; and to prevent the Censure that may be apt to fall upon them for their ill Conduct, will be very ready to declare the Attempts of this kind impracticable, unseasonable, or imprudent, as they do most other things of the same nature ; which, 'tis much to be both feared and lamented, many of them want either Zeal, or perhaps Honesty to undertake, which Men of no less true Wisdom,

Wisdom, (if that Principle, whether it be called Caution or Policy, that keeps Men from doing their Duty, deserves the Name of Folly, rather than Wisdom) not only attempt, but surmount the appearing Difficulties of. But tho' Resistance to the first Attempts of Reformation from the Powers of Darknes and the corrupt Nature of Man might be foreseen, and may have been experienced by those concerned in the Transactions I have given an Account of, and may be still expected in some measure in the Prosecution of it; yet as 'twas at first necessary to undertake it, so 'tis still as necessary to pursue it: Nay, the higher the Tide of Debauchery and Prophaneness runs, the more evident Reason there is for us to look to our Banks, to use all proper Methods for the Opposing of it, and the more generous and brave is the Opposition, unless 'tis more reasonable to give way to it, and expect an Inundation of Wickedness and Ruine, than to endeavour to prevent it, since as the Case will grow the worse, and more desperate by the delay, so the Objections that are now made against it will thereby grow the stronger.

Let then the Opposition to this Enterprize be as great and desperate, and from as various Causes as we can well suppose it; if those who are engaged in it do sincerely propose God's Glory and the Good of Mankind in their Endeavours; if they often turn their Thoughts within themselves, as well as upon the Faults of others, and endeavour *to be blameless and harmless, and without Rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation; if they take great Care that their Conduct in this Affair be regular, governed by the Laws of the Land, and the Precepts of their Religion, *We may hope to see the present Undertaking carried on to a glorious Issue if those that are engaged in it acquit themselves as they ought.*

ligion, *Phil.2.15.

ligion, remembering that the Goodness of no end can make Evil means lawful, and as free as far as 'tis possible from Imprudences and Inadvertencies, to which the wisest and best Men are subject, (and therefore are no reasonable Objection against a good Design to honest Men, that know how to give all just Allowances to Humane Frailties in a Work of Difficulty, wherein many unexpected Occurrences will arise, Numbers of Men are engaged, and who will be sometimes taken unprepar'd and at disadvantage by bad and designing Men, who will not fail to wait for their Halting, and to improve all kind of Advantages against them;) if they go on with Diligence and Resolution, considering that *Solo-*
Eccl. 9. 10. mon's Direction, Whatever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might, in this Work seems more especially to be regarded by those who are employed in it, a Curse being pronounced against them that *do the Work of the Lord || deceitfully,* and a Crown of Life being promised to them * *that are faithful to Death;* if, lastly, they cry mightily to God, to whose Omnipotence no Difficulties are insuperable, and without whom nothing is strong, no Means can attain their end for his gracious Direction and merciful Assistance in a Work of Hazard and Difficulty, wherein Wisdom and Constancy, the Spiritual Armour of the Gospel, is requisite, the Honour and Interest of Religion and the Good of Souls seem to be so much concern'd, to prevent their being assaulted with such violent Temptations that might overcome them, or to give them such extraordinary Supports and Comforts as may enable them to bear up under them; and they humbly depend more upon his Direction and Blessing than their own

own Diligence and Conduct, considering that the Zeal we have for God's Honour, and the Success of it is from Him; that our best Endeavours herein, as well as our other Performances, will have a great mixture of Humane Frailty; and that after *all we shall do we shall be but unprofitable* Luk. 17. 10.
Servants. If they thus go on with Sincerity, with Prudence, with Courage, with Humility, and trust in God, they may, I think, face all the World, we may soon see what Courage Vice hath, whether Prophaneness and Debauchery will be able to hold up their Heads with their Supporters, (which they have too long had within our Memory) as Religion hath often done without them, and when the Powers of the World have been against it. No, Sin is of the Nature of the Devil, its Author, cowardly and sneaking, and will, with God's Blessing, give away when thus opposed, which those concerned in the Transactions I have given an Account of, have, I suppose, abundantly experimented, and who have had so great Success, as makes it very evident that a general Concurrence of good Men may effect a general Reformation; but if the Concurrence of Men of Religion should not prove so universal as is hoped it will, or if our Endeavours should not succeed to a National Reformation, as is proposed, we may however hope to do a great deal of Good; we shall bear our Testimony to Religion against the Corruptions of the Age, and we cannot, I think, fail of giving a great Check to publick Wickedness; and tho' we should not after all, by our Prayers and Endeavours, prevent the Deluge of Calamities that threaten us, an Ark may mercifully be provided for us, we may deliver our own Souls, and it
will

will then be known who they are that are to be thanked that a thorough Reformation was not effected, and the Misery of the Nation prevented; not only those who by desperately discouraging and opposing pious and proper Endeavours for Promoting a Reformation, seem to be of the Number of those that may be said, in some
Act. 5. 39. sense, *to fight against God*; but those likewise that despised the Warnings we gave them of their Danger, all the Perswasions with which we pressed them to set about it, and would not be prevailed with to give any hearty Assistance to the Work. Supposing then, as hath been said, that we are to prepare, in the Prosecution of this Enterprize, for evil Surmisings and reproachful Words; for Storms of Malice and ill Will, which the Enemy of all Goodness and the Passions of Men may be expected to raise, this, I conceive, may, now the Tide is turning, be generally the greatest Opposition of the infatuated and senseless Slaves of Vice; for in Reverence to our common Nature I must presume, that there are but few that will be declared Agents for the Devil, that are so abandoned of all Sense of Honour, all Concern for their Reputation, as to enter publickly the Lists, and venture their Lives for his Service. And as wicked Men have therein the worst Cause, they have not, I think, settled and steady Principles to act upon, but little true Courage, and not much Faith among them; they will often betray one another when Occasion offers, and therefore we may conclude that they will never make a firm stand against the united Body of good Men if they acquit themselves as they ought in so glorious an Undertaking.

To the Men of Religion and Virtue of all Ranks, *An Appli-*
Orders and Denominations, without distinction, *cation to pi-*
 I ask leave therefore, in this common Cause of *ous Men of*
 Religion, humbly to apply my self. Your Reli- *all Ranks,*
 gion is avowedly attacqued by the desperate Re- *Orders, and*
 bels of Christianity, and Enemies to Virtue; *Denomina-*
 your God is publickly dishonoured, yea some- *tions.*
 times, 'tis still to be feared, Blasphemed, for the
 Entertainment of Persons of all Degrees, all Ages,
 and both Sexes; His Laws are trampled on; His
 Servants despis'd; the Notions of Good and Evil
 are endeavoured to be confounded, and your
 Country is in imminent Danger of being lost, if
 in the present Contest between Religion and De-
 bauchery, Religion does not prevail. You are
 all confessedly, by your Baptismal Engagement,
 listed Soldiers for God's Service, against the De-
 vil's Kingdom. And as God has an undoubted
 Title to your Service, the King, by publickly
 declaring for a vigorous Execution of the Laws
 against publick Wickedness, and the Cause of
 Religion, hath given you an happy Opportunity
 of discharging your Fidelity and Zeal for your
 Great Lord and Master; and your fellow Chri-
 stians who are already successfully engaged in a
 publick Opposition to Vice and Prophaneness, to
 these Rebels to Religion, and Enemies to your
 Country, seem to call on you to enter into their
 pious Confederacy, as *Moses* heretofore did on
 the *Israclites*, when he stood in the Gate of the
 Camp; *Who is on the Lord's side, let him come* *Exod. 32.*
unto me? Or as Holy David of old, *Who will* *20.*
rise up for me against the Evil doers? Who will *Psal. 94. 16.*
stand up for me against the Workers of Iniquity?
 Now then is the Time to make one general and
 brave Effort for the Interest of Religion, and for
 the

the Welfare of the *English* Nation, and will you any longer defer your Declaring and Engaging in this Glorious Work, now it seems so apparent that this Cloud that appeared so little to you at first is like to overspread our whole Horizon; that one of the most plausible and uncomfortable Objections which was made to this Undertaking, of its being impracticable, which we have too much reason to suspect to be upon this, as well as upon other like Occasions, an Excuse for Fear, Laziness, or want of good Principles, is taken off, by the great Success that hath attended it; that the Heat of the Day, the fiercest Opposition to these Attempts, seems much over; and that you have so very great reason to conclude, that the Virtuous part of the Nation, of all Parties, will fall in and give their Assistance in it, when more particular Methods shall be laid (as they will soon be) before them; that if we point our united Batteries against the strong holds of Debauchery and Prophaneness; if we prosecute this Religious War with Conduct and Resolution, which is so successfully begun with so unequal a humane force, we have Victory in View, we may, with God's Blessing, see a Reformation thoroughly effected, and put upon such a firm Foundation, as that it may not be easily in the Power of a vicious Court, or of a degenerate Nobility or Gentry in a succeeding Reign to overturn it, again to debauch the Nation, and bring it in such Danger of Ruine. But is it not enough that you that have had an early Knowledge of these Transactions, have not sooner engaged in a Cause which you could not well be supposed, without great Inconsideration or Prejudice, but secretly to approve of under all its Disad-

Disadvantages, when it was in it self the same as it is now with its Success, and meerly perhaps because you thought the Service might be too hot for you, and therefore you left it to others to engage in an Opposition to Vice whilst it was Triumphant, to fall upon it in its Intrenchments, to bear the brunt of the Battle, and reserved your selves for less doubtful and dangerous Service, till the main Body of the Nation should come up, and Victory should be turning on the side of Virtue? Cowardice in this Case, as in War, may be almost as mischievous and as criminal as Treachery. Where is then your Zeal for God, or Charity for Man, if you appear still so unconcerned whether Religion or Prophaneness prevails; if after *Ten Years* are past of a Reign in which we had reason to promise our selves a Reformation would be carried on, and be the Glory of it, you still frame further Excuses to postpone it, and such weak ones as will very hardly pass with a mortal Man, who understands what indispensable Obligations Religion lays upon us, heartily to set about it; but surely not with the living God, that *sees not as Man sees, but searches the Heart*? Do you think this Nation hath not bled and suffered enough for our inexcusable Delays, our deferring this necessary Work? How can you reconcile your Neutrality to the Promises which many of you may be supposed to have made in the late Days of our outward Humiliation? or the Prayers that most of you put up to God for a National Reformation? How is it consistent with the Pretensions you make of your being of the purest Religion, or of the best constituted Church? What do you think of that Declaration of your Blessed Saviour, *He that is not with me is* Mat. 12. 30.

Neutrality and Cowardice in the Business of Reformation both mischievous and scandalous.

against

* *Athletam against me?* Can you persuade your selves that stadium, your continuing your Neutrality till the Victory Nauclerum is either so gained on the side of Religion, that tempestas, there will be little need of your Assistance; or that duceem pug- the Interests of Religion are depressed, and your na, magna- Country ruined, (which there is such Danger of) nimum ca- beyond the Example of former Ages, deserves lamitas, either the Name of Bravery, or *the Wisdom that Christianum is from above?* * Difficulties and Sufferings are verò tenta- surely the proper Exercises of Christians, are as tio probat it were the Test and Touch-stone of Noble & exanimat. Minds; and therefore the Persons who in all Calamitas Ages have been esteemed the Wisest and Bravest, virtutis est and to have deserved best of Mankind, have been occasio. those, who for the Vindication of Truth, the Ad omne Cause of Religion, and the Service of their pulchrum Country, have cheerfully undergone Ignominy, vir bonus si- Banishment and Death, through the Malignity ne ulla cun- of the Times, popular Fury, or the Tyranny etatione of Governments; † inasmuch, that the most ce- procurrit; lebrated Heathen Moralists and Philosophers de- stet illic car- clared, That a Man could hardly be supposed to be nifex, stet *Virtuous without Suffering for being so.* And one tortor atq; ignis perse- verabit; non quid passurus, sed quid facturus sit adspiciet. *Sen. Vit. B.*

† Nondum felix es, si te nondum turba deridet.

Nihil, mihi videtur, infelicius eo cui nihil unquam evenit adversi, non licuit illi se experiri. Transisti sine Adversario vitam, nemo sciet quid potueris: nè tu quidem ipse.

Magnum exemplum nisi mala fortuna non invenit.

Mutium ignis, Fabritium paupertas, Regulum tormenta, Socratem venenum superare non potuit. Cicuta magnum Socratem fecit. *Sen. Ep.*

Non enim hilaritate, nec lasciviâ, nec risu, aut joco comite levitatis, sed sæpe etiam tristes firmitate & constantiâ sunt beati. *Cic. de fin.*

Ἔρξαι δὲ τάδε, ὅτι ἔγω διακείμενος ὁ δίκαιος μασηγώσεται, σφριβλώσεται, δεδησεται, ἡκνωθήσεται, τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τελευτῶν, πάντα κακὰ παθὼν, αἰαχέει διλευθήσεται. *Plato de Rep. lib. 2. p. 361.*

of them could, we are told, bravely express himself, to this purpose: If a Man can see a Sword at his Eyes without winking; if he can make it an indifferent matter to him, whether his Life goes out of his Throat, or at his Mouth; if he can hear himself sentenced to Banishment, or Torments, and can say, *All this I am provided for*; this is the Temper of Mind that makes him happy. Accordingly *Socrates* obtained so great Fame for his Suffering Death with Constancy for his Religion. *Aristides* his Justice, and *Rutilius* his Integrity and Courage, were more signalized by their Banishment. But not to send Christians to learn Constancy in Suffering for a good Cause to Heathens, among whom, we are told, it was, in the first Ages of Christianity, a common saying, **That the Christians only were Despisers of Death.** *Soli Christiani mortis contemptores.* So that *Origen* could, it seems, boldly tell them, *We can as cheerfully lay down our Lives for our Religion, as the hardiest Philosopher of you can lay down his Coat.* Did the Martyrs and Confessors count it so great an Honour and Happiness to suffer Bonds and Imprisonment, Exile, and all kinds of Death; to be Racked, Burnt, Stoned, Boiled; to be thrown to wild Beasts, and condemned to the Mines, for the Honour of their Lord and Master, and the Salvation of their Souls; laught at all the Methods of Cruelty, and tired out the Malice of their Persecutors? And by these means, as the Roman Emperour and Philosopher, *Marcus Antoninus*, is said to have told the common Assembly at *Ephesus*, in his Letter to them, to stop the blind Rage of the Pagan Priests and People against them, *They were always Conquerours.* Could such vast Numbers of Persons, of both Sexes, of all Ages, and such various Conditions, more greedily

ly court Martyrdom, than Men did in after-Ages seek Bishopricks and Preferments in the Church, and valued it more than Crowns and Scepters? infomuch, that it was thought fit to discourage and restrain their Exposing themselves unnecessarily to it. And can the Disciples of the same Crucify'd Saviour, who are obliged by him to

Luk. 14. 27. *bear the Cross*, are bid to *rejoice and be exceeding glad*

Mat. 5. 11. *when they are reviled and persecuted for his Sake*; and are directed by the Apostle, *to count it all Joy*

Jam. 1. 2. *when they fall into divers Temptations*, be affrighted at all Appearances of Suffering in a good Cause

The Pains think the Danger only of meeting with Shame, and Miseries which or other little Inconveniencies, a sufficient Excuse for their not appearing for the Honour of their bad Men go Lord and Master, and the Saving of their through in Country? Nay, Can the Soldier endure all the pursuit of Fatigues, and venture all the Hazards of War, their secular Concerns make his way through Blood and Bullets, Fire or ill Designs, and Water, upon no higher Motives generally, do reproach tis to be feared, than for larger Pay, or a greater the Sloth Post of Honour in an Army; to be talkt of by and Cowardice of the those that have no more Reason than himself, Generality or use it to as little Purpose? Can the Courtier, of Christians in the in a corrupt Reign, intrigue and plod, lye and Cause of Religion. Fawn, lose his rest, and waft his Spirits, endure the Frowns of Men, and the Reproaches of his own Conscience, to please an Earthly Prince, that is composed of the same Elements with himself? Can the Covetous Man drudge and sweat, pinch Nature, and harass it, live Poorly and Contemptibly, for the miserable Consideration of filling his Chests full of polished Earth, or leaving it for a Son who often takes almost as much Pains to damn his Soul in Spending it, as his Father might his, without Repentance, by his

his unjustifiable Methods of Getting it? Can the Sons of Wine and Lust be content to brute their Minds, and ruine their Bodies; bear the Cries of ruined Tradesmen, and of their miserable Families; to transmit Poverty and Disease, Infamy and Misery to their Posterity; to watch and fear; to rot and roar for their unlawful and beastly Pleasures? Can the Libertine, when his Conscience will not suffer him to be easie in his Sins; when he wishes there was no Religion in this World nor future Account in the next, be indefatigable in raking out of the Heathen Authors, and our modern Plays, all Expressions that may seem to favour his Licentiousness, and may help to beget or strengthen his Infidelity; in short, take more pains to silence and stupifie his Conscience than might, with God's Blessing, be sufficient, if it were well applied, to subdue his vicious Habits, to be wise and to be happy? Can these Men be thus resolute, diligent and daring in the pursuit of their Sins, or the empty things of this World, that neither Frowns nor Favours, Hazards nor Difficulties, do make any such Impressions upon them, as either to deter or allure them from the Prosecution of their Designs, or from *Treasuring up to themselves Wrath* Rom. 2. 5. *against the Day of Wrath*, from being irrecoverably, unspeakably and eternally miserable? And shall the Profelytes of Religion, that know its inestimable Value, be so faint-hearted and sneaking in its glorious Cause, and in the discharge of their Duty, for the obtaining an Everlasting Happiness, that every little Difficulty, the Favour or the Frowns of its open Enemies, shall discourage and keep them from giving their Assistance in its Defence? This, one would think, all Men that

are sincerely concerned for the Honour and Interest of Religion, and expect to receive the unspeakable Rewards it proposes to those that faithfully pursue it, will be ashamed of. I confess to the World, I dare not, I know not how to hope to be rewarded with Everlasting Honour and Happiness hereafter from him, who in the Purchasing of our Redemption *endured the Cross, despising the Shame*, if I can't prevail upon my self to suffer ill Treatment; to be calumniated, laugh'd at, and contemn'd in Obedience to his Commands, and for the Good of Souls, *for whom He died*: Nay, I will not ask Pardon of the prophane Crew, the Generation of Scorners that I tell them yet more plainly, that I hope I had rather bear all the Contempt that their Tongues and Pens can fling upon me for any Assistance I am enabled, by God's Grace, to give this Cause I am representing, (whilst I continue under the same Sentiments of it) which I do expect a share of, and am preparing my self to welcome; nay, to suffer Death, if I am called to it, in the Discharge of my Duty therein, rather than bear the Reproaches of my own Mind in this World for an Unconcernedness for it, and much more than to be disowned by my Blessed Saviour at the great Day of Recompence, and to endure his Everlasting Displeasure. And without the leave of those unhappy Wretches who would pass for Wits in these Days, by saying such things as have in former Ages mark'd those that have been guilty of them with the most infamous Characters, and have made them look'd on as Enemies of Mankind, even Monsters in Humane Nature; those Panders for Hell I mean who turn the most serious and sacred things into Jest and Railery,

The horrid
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just Endeavours of Re-
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Railery, and who will not therefore, I suppose, fail to treat with Scorn and Reproach the present Endeavours of Reformation, and those that are concerned in them: I must remember them, that the Scripture not only tells us, that *in the last Days Scoffers shall appear, and that Judgments are prepared for Scorners*, but, particularly, that God *scorneth the Scorners*. And as for those that herd among these prophane Scoffers, these professed Advocates for the Devil's Service, that neglect their Duty, and sacrifice their Consciences, only to avoid their Scorn and Contumelies, let me desire them to consider, whether they have not Reason to fear, that God will treat them with Everlasting Contempt who for his sake, or in Obedience to his plain Commands, refuse to be condemned.

Let us not then, Fellow-Christians, who would be accounted faithful Soldiers of Jesus Christ, be afraid of the Reproach and Revilings of such prophane and profligate Wretches, but let us rejoice in them, and in any other Persecution which we may undergo in so glorious a Cause. Let us consider, that this Life is the proper Season for Service and Suffering, and the next of Reward and Happiness. * Let the Lives and Deaths of the Martyrs and Confessors of old be much in our Minds. Let us remember, that the best Christians in all Ages have been derided and contemned; that our Blessed Saviour himself, the Cap-
 * Unumquodque habet propositum Principes suos.
 Romanos ducuntur Camillos, Fabritios, Scipiones: Philosophi proponant Socratem, Platonem, Aristotelem, &c. Nos autem habeamus propositi nostri principes, Paulos, Hilariones, &c.

Aliquis vir bonus nobis ante oculos habendus est, elige itaque Catonem, elige Lælium, &c. Sen. Ep. 11. p. 180.

Isa. 53. 3. *tain of our Salvation, who was despised and re-*
 Luke 12. 5. *jected of Men, hath commanded us not to be a-*
fraid of them that kill the Body, and after that
have no more that they can do; but to fear him that
 Mark 8. 38. *hath Power to cast into Hell; and hath said, that*
whosoever shall be ashamed of him, and of his
Words, of him also shall he be ashamed when he
cometh in the Glory of his Father with the Holy
 Matt. 5. 11, 12. *Angels; but that if we are Reviled and Persecu-*
ted for his Sake our Reward shall be great in Hea-

ven. Let us fortify our selves with these Con-
 siderations against the most violent Opposition
 of the Enemies of Goodness, and the dangerous
 Suggestions and ill Examples of formal and luke-
 warm Christians, and of those who are too of-
 ten falsely called Friends; let us look on all their
 Insinuations, and any Objections whatsoever to
 the Discharge of our Duty in this Undertaking,
 which we may meet with from the Prudent and
 the Wary, tending to discourage us from the
 hearty Prosecution of it, as Temptations that we
 are to resist, unless they can convince us that we
 do not act herein as becomes Men and Christians,
 and good Members of the Community; that this
 Work is not honourable in it self, desirable in
 its Effects, and acceptable to Almighty God,
 which, I think, they will never do, since they
 cannot, I conceive, prove, that the Civil Go-
 vernment ought not to endeavour to punish and
 suppress publick Sins, and the open Defiance of
 Religion, in answer to Scripture, clear Reason, and
 the general Consent of Mankind to the contrary.

An Appli- Lastly therefore, Let all those who are already
cation to all sincerely concerned in this Noble Undertaking, and
that are sin- all others that have any Love to God, any Cha-
cerly con- rity to Man, any Concern for their Country, or
than Regard

Regard to their Posterity, to engage them in it, *cerned in the*
consider, that we have herein the Laws of God *Work of Re-*
and of the Nation, the Commands of the King, *formatton*
the Concurrence of a late Representative Body *to be steady*
of the Nation, the Prayers of good Men, the *in it, and*
Pretences of those that carry but a Form and *to rejoice in*
Profession of Religion, and the Consciences that *any Suffer-*
are not hardned, even of bad Men, on our side, *ings they*
and moreover, the great Success that hath alrea- *may meet*
dy attended these Attempts, to animate and en- *with for the*
courage our Zeal and Diligence in it; so that if *discharge of*
we acquit our selves herein like Men and Chri- *their Duty.*
stians; if God is on our side, we know, *there is*
(as Solomon says) *no Wisdom, nor Understanding,*
nor Counsel against Him; we need not much fear
the Strength or Policy of the World, or the Po-
wers of Darkness; we may, with God's Blef-
sing, see Prophaneness and Debauchery every
day more and more fly into dark Corners, as I-
dolatry of old did at the Appearance of Chri-
stianity, Vice be branded and confounded, Vir-
tue be embraced, Religion prevail, *England*
flourish, and give such an Example as may pro-
voke succeeding Ages and other Nations to an
Imitation, and give perhaps Occasion to reform
Christendom and Mankind. But what Triumph
of Soul, which neither Riches, nor Honours, nor
the Flesh can give, such happy Souls may, Living
or Dying have, who have undergone Shame and
Sufferings in the faithful Discharge of their Duty,
and for the Cause of God, who have been his
Instruments in bringing about such blessed Effects,
nay, in discharging their Duty herein and in o-
ther respects sincerely, tho' Success which is not
in our Power, and will not be required of us,
should not attend it? And, on the contrary what

Prov. 21.
30.

severe Reflections they may hereafter make on their Behaviour, who, after this Matter is plainly laid before them, and a publick Reformation of Manners seems to be put as it were into their hands, will either openly oppose, or secretly undermine the just Endeavours of it, or that will not be prevail'd upon either to concur in the Methods that are already laid, or to engage in any other that they can suppose may be more effectual for the carrying on a National Reformation; that can contentedly look on and see their Fellow Christians suffer in any kind, by their brave Opposition to the declared Enemies of God, and the Devil's Kingdom, the Cause of Religion to be injured and depressed, and their Country so much endangered, for want of their giving their seasonable and zealous Assistance to it, I will not undertake to describe.

I will only add, That if the *Attempts of Reformation*, which were began with so great Disadvantage, have born up under so many Difficulties, which are carried on by the united Endeavours of such Bodies of Men, in the several Parts of this City, are spreading through the Cities and Corporations of the Kingdom, and are propagating in those of *Ireland*, who have a Communication with one another, are governed by Methods that have been approved by Persons of great Wisdom and consummated Judgment, and which have been so highly successful, should be defeated by the Industry and Power, the Number and Interest of its Enemies; If, I say, we should suffer Debauchery and Prophaneness to regain their ground, and to carry the Victory, after the Advances that are thus made towards the Suppressing of them, and the Encouragements and Advantages

vantages we have for the Carrying of them on to so glorious an Issue, have we not very great Reason to fear, that we may never again have such an Opportunity put into our Hands? Can it be thought easie, humanly speaking, to bring the Bodies of Men together that are now engaged in it, to rally and reassume a baffled Cause, wherein they may perhaps be apt to think they may have made a full and dismal Experiment of the desperate Aversion and Opposition of this Generation to Reformation, have, if they have acted therein, and in other parts of their Duty, sincerely, kept the Guilt of publick Wickedness from lying on them, and may have delivered their own Souls? Or is there any probability that this Cause will be revived and successfully retrieved by those, whom no Arguments will now prevail on to concur in the present Methods, or to give any other zealous Assistance to it? And who is there that believes that there is a Righteous God that governs the World, that will not fear, how sanguine soever some Men may be upon the firmness of our present Peace and Settlement, that notwithstanding our Councils and Confederacies, we shall feel the Effects of the high Displeasure of Almighty God, upon whose Blessing the Stability of our present Peace and outward Prosperity does depend; that *He will be avenged on such a Nation as this?* And if this should prove to be our dismal Case, might it not then be said over us; O ungrateful and rebellious Nation, that wouldest so provoke infinite Patience and Forbearance, wouldest obstinately refuse so many gracious Offers, contemn such various Methods of Mercy, as if thou hadst been desperately resolved upon Destruction! O England! England!

To

Jer. 5. 9.

To what Misery have thy Sins brought thee! But the Cause of Reformation is God's Cause, His Providence hath seemed to me to favour the poor Endeavours of it, which are represented in these Papers, and therefore I hope they will, with his Blessing, so prosper and prevail, that such a National Reformation may be effected as may prevent His heavy Judgments falling upon us.

And may almighty God, who is pleased to magnifie his Power in Weakness, for this End mercifully direct and support those who are sincerely engaged in this Glorious Work, give what is said herein agreeable to his Will some Success in the furthering of it, and graciously pardon any thing in it that may not be acceptable to Him, for the Lord Jesus Christ's Sake.

All Glory to G O D.

An Account of the Societies For Reformation of Manners, In England and
Ireland With a Persuasive to Persons of all Ranks, To Be Zealous and
Diligent in Promoting the Execution of the Laws against Prophaneness and
Debauchery, for the Effecting A National Reformation

London 1701

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